Encounter

edited by
Stephen Spender &
Melvin J. Lasky
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Scientists in Whitehall
R. H. S. Crossman

Man of the Red Corner
Jorge Luis Borges

The Psycholinguists
George A. Miller

Max Frisch's "Andorra"
Friedrich Torberg

Mussolini
Luigi Barzini

Poems
W. H. Auden
Robert Lowell

Letter From Paris
Richard Mayne

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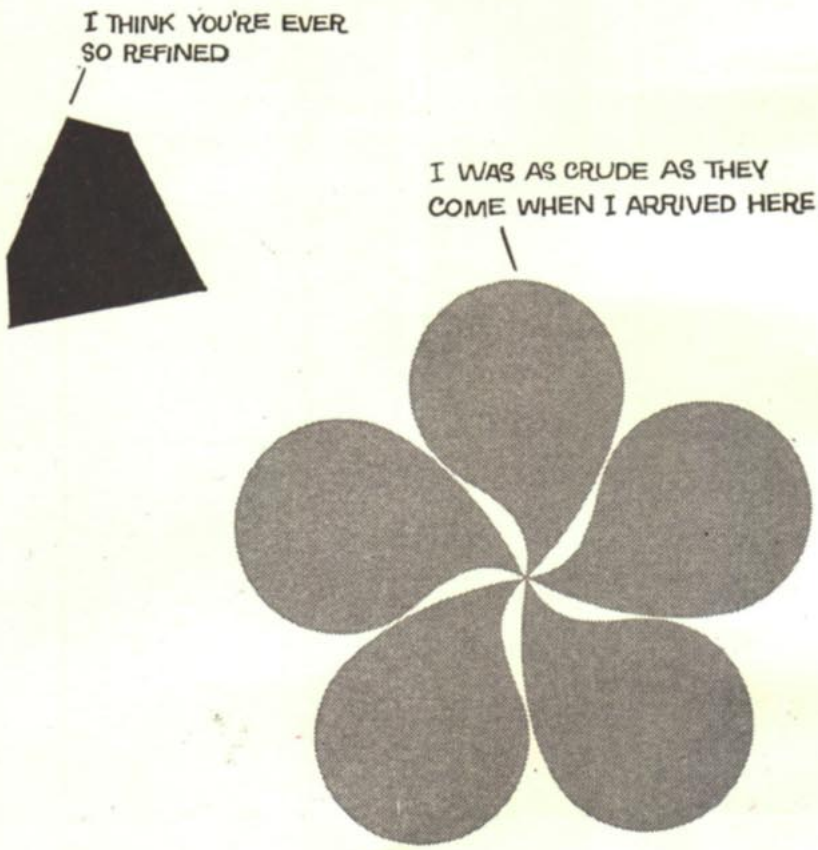

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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SCIENTISTS IN WHITEHALL	3	*R. H. S. Crossman*
MAN OF THE RED CORNER (story)	11	*Jorge Luis Borges*
BENITO MUSSOLINI	16	*Luigi Barzini*
POETRY		
PADDINGTON RECEIVES	10	*Howard Griffin*
LAMENT	15	*Samuel Menashe*
ICELAND REVISITED	28	*W. H. Auden*
BRUNETTO LATINI	38	*Robert Lowell*
MEN & IDEAS		
THE PSYCHOLINGUISTS	29	*George A. Miller*
NOTES & TOPICS		
MIDDLE EAST & WEST	41	*H. V. Hodson*
PARLEZ-VOUS DESPERANTO?	44	*Richard Mayne*
ENGLISH AS A "SECOND LANGUAGE"	48	*Max Beloff*
BLACK MUSLIMS, WHITE LIBERALS	52	*Marcus Cunliffe*
MAX FRISCH'S "ANDORRA"	54	*Friedrich Torberg*
LITERARY BAROQUE & ROLL	56	*M. J. L.*
BOOKS		
KOESTLER'S ACT OF CREATION	58	*Stephen Toulmin*
TOUGH & TENDER	71	*Tony Tanner*
PARTY WORD GAME	75	*Keith Kyle*
PRESS		
DISSENT OVER CUBA	82	*Herbert L. Matthews*
LETTERS	91	
AUTHORS	96	
POSTSCRIPT	96	

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R. H. S. Crossman

Scientists in Whitehall

Thoughts on the Eve

IN NOVEMBER, 1959, the Labour Party began to conduct a collective post-mortem on its third successive electoral defeat. Re-reading recently some of the lectures, articles, and pamphlets,[1] I found it extraordinarily difficult to recall how we were thinking and feeling in that antediluvian epoch—less than five years ago. But the effort is worth making if only to remind oneself how unpredictable British politics are. In the winter of 1959, the Macmillan Comet was at its zenith, and the Labour Party seemed down and out.

Looking back now at this ancient history, the first thing that strikes me is the degree of agreement the Party had achieved under Hugh Gaitskell's leadership. As a result of all the work that had been done during the years before the 1959 election, there was virtually no disagreement about the programme that a Labour Government, if elected, would carry out. The disagreement concerned what we heretics on the left called "our socialist philosophy," and what the pundits on the right preferred to describe as "the Party image."

Our heresy consisted in a stubborn determination, despite the three successive electoral defeats, to stick to our "irrelevant" socialist principles until another crisis made them relevant—even if this meant a long sojourn in the wilderness. Their orthodoxy consisted in a fervent determination to regain electoral popularity, even at the cost of jettisoning a whole cargo of socialist goods, ranging from nationalisation to Clause 4. We, in fact, were Traditionalists, convinced that we had history on our side. They were Revisionists, convinced that the only hope of revitalising the Labour Party was to break with tradition, and turn it into a British version of the American Democratic Party or the German Social Democrats. Although we had achieved by long and painful discussion agreement on policy, we were still divided—by mistrust. We doubted their sincerity: they doubted our capacity. What we needed to dissolve this distrust was first a new, creative socialist idea, and secondly a situation to which it was demonstrably relevant. Both these requirements have been met to-day. But they seemed depressingly absent in that winter of 1959.

THE SECOND THING that strikes me, looking back on those far off days of defeat and recrimination, is the exaggerated importance politicians attribute to their ideas, and the scant attention they pay to the objective factors which so largely determine elections. Each faction believed that the ideas and attitudes of the other had damaged the Labour Party's chances, and denied it the victory that would otherwise have been its due. Yet everyone can now see that our defeat was due neither to the Revisionism of the Right nor the Traditionalism of the Left. We lost quite simply because the British people, in the golden autumn of 1959, were content with their Government. They felt they "never had it so

[1] *E.g.*, C. A. R. Crosland, "The Future of the Left (included in his book *The Conservative Enemy*, Cape, 1963), and my reply, "The Spectre of Revisionism," in ENCOUNTER, March and April, 1960. Also Crosland's Fabian pamphlet, "Can Labour Win?" and my own "Labour and the Affluent Society," which was based on a Fabian lecture delivered in November, 1959. Last November I was once again invited by the Fabian Society to give a lecture on "Scientists in Whitehall," from which this article is adapted.

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good" as under the Tories, and they were very much afraid that a Labour victory would threaten their new-found prosperity. And to clinch our discomfiture, the complaisant materialism of the ordinary voter was not in those days condemned as immoral. The man in the street could vote against change with a good conscience when Top People were unanimously assuring him that Harold Macmillan's Britain was as sound as a bell.

Four years ago it was not only leading Socialist Revisionists who were telling us that "economic stagnation was something of which a Tory Government could never again be accused by a sensible Labour Opposition." Private affluence and public squalor is now a cliché. But four years ago it was dismissed by responsible people as a clever-clever paradox. We were still in the pre-Galbraith era. The economy of the United States was still the faultless paradigm, and the watchword of orthodoxy ran: "We must make our British economy expand as steadily and as fast as that of the U.S.A."

All my life I have watched the gyrations of the British Establishment. They move like a flight of starlings. One turns, all turn! One month, they are all optimists—confident we can rely on the stability of the American economy. Next month, they are all pessimists—convinced that we must take refuge inside the Common Market. The U.S.A. and the Commonwealth are suddenly out of favour, and you can hardly enter the Athenaeum if you mention our obligations to New Zealand. Then, one fine day, General de Gaulle stops the negotiations and the Common Market phase ends as suddenly as it began. The starlings swoop over to another perch, and sit there twittering in unison. Let no one tell me that academic education inspires independence of thought, and discourages tame conformity. The behaviour of the British establishment since 1959 demonstrates that this proposition is untrue, and if some of our Labour Revisionists flew with the starlings, at least they were wrong at the right time and in the right company.

Of course I am describing ancient history—history before the flood that swept Macmillan out and Home in. The last two years have seen an ideological upheaval so violent that the Conservative Party has espoused an incomes policy, planning and controls. Affluence is a dirty word, and *The Times* thunders in terms of Galbraithian economics. Once again the Establishment starlings have taken off with brilliant simultaneity, and are poised to land on a new orthodoxy.

But if history made the Revisionists look pretty silly, we heretics also got a number of things quite wrong. I confess, for example, that I failed to foresee either the economic consequences of Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, or the political consequences of Miss Christine Keeler. Instead I convinced myself that faith in the Conservatives would be undermined by a Munich-style crisis in Quemoy or in Berlin, where our bluff would be called and we would have to surrender to the Russians because we had nothing with which to defend ourselves except nuclear weapons. In fact, I was possessed by the atmosphere of the Eisenhower-Dulles era, and completely failed to foresee a Kennedy era or a Cuba crisis, in which it was the Russian bluff that was called, and the Americans who showed statesmanship by forgoing the fruits of victory.

Another thing we got wrong was the pace of change, the rapidity with which the voters' complacency would be undermined by events. We had assumed that it might well be a long time before the electorate began to realise that "you've never had it so good" was a fraudulent slogan. If only I had written "two years" instead of "a few years," for in March 1961 came the Orpington by-election; the trend was reversed and disillusionment took the place of complacency.

WHAT CAUSED the astonishing switch since those far-off days? Mr. Gerald Kaufman has recently analysed all the by-elections and showed—to my mind pretty conclusively—that it is difficult to correlate it with anything any socialist leader, orthodox or heretic, said or did. Indeed, it was while the Labour Party was still divided and weak that the public began to feel it was time for a change. And as soon as the political climate changed, suddenly the affluent society was out of fashion; *The Times* began to thunder against its immorality, and economic pundits started arguing that stagnancy could only be ended by economic planning and an incomes policy. Even the poor derided nationalised industries began to creep back into favour. As so often before in British history, heresy had become orthodoxy almost overnight.

This upheaval was largely unforeseen by Government and Opposition alike. What first set it going? And what, once it had started,

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kept it moving at a constantly accelerating speed? The answer is now glaringly obvious; yet four years ago only a handful of individuals —among them Harold Wilson and Morgan Phillips—saw the two most important factors in the situation. In this respect, socialist heresy and orthodoxy were equally blind.

THE FIRST OF THESE FACTORS was the constantly accelerating rate of technological change, particularly since the end of World War II. Since Harold Wilson's speech at Scarborough, this has been impressed so deeply on public opinion that this new and powerful argument for socialism is in danger of becoming a cliché. Of course, it is not new to say that changes in the techniques of production, distribution, and exchange largely determined social change. But in 1867 when *Das Kapital* was first published, the actual rate of change was much slower than Marx realised, and it was this fact that caused his predictions of world revolution to be falsified by history. Technology was developing so slowly during the 19th century that Governments were able to adapt themselves in time to avert catastrophe. But a hundred years after Marx, the pace of technological change has been so speeded up that the social revolutions he anticipated are now physically possible. In fact they are taking place throughout Asia and Africa wherever industrialisation and modernisation impact on primitive economies.

In itself, this accelerating rate of scientific and technological growth is formidable enough. But there is a second factor which aggravates it still further—the social explosion which is caused by the injection of these new technologies into an unplanned society. I was very struck the other day when I read in a text by Barbara Ward of the effect of the "urban explosion." We all know, she pointed out, the destructive power of the nuclear bomb; but we don't realise that the city has as destructive a power as the H-bomb. At a recent conference of town planners and architects, held in Athens under the chairmanship of Mr. Doxiades, it was stated that every day the city grows larger by 70 houses and 30 foot of road. Here was a great dragon, eating up everything, destroying the old social organism, creating an asphalt desert, in which human beings have yet to learn how a civilised life can be lived. As Miss Ward pointed out, this cancer of the modern conurbation is the result of the impact of rapid technological advance on a society used to a slow rate of change.

THE SECOND EXAMPLE I want to take in order to illustrate the explosive impact of new technology is in the field of education, for the techniques of communication are being transformed as fast as the techniques of destruction or the techniques of urban development. I do not only refer to changes caused by television or the computer. In linguistics, mathematics, and physics, revolutionary new teaching methods are being developed by a minority of progressive teachers. Where are they most fiercely resisted? In the teaching profession, of course. But in this they are not peculiar. All of us resist any change which affects our own skill and our own status in society. Ask the political leaders what kind of change they think would be desirable in the House of Commons, and you will find a strange coalition of conservatism between the two front benches; it would probably even include the leader of the Communist Party, if there were communists in the House of Commons. Like the teachers, the politicians do not want to have a scientific study made of their own institutions, or to ask themselves whether those institutions are capable of being adapted to the incredible modern rate of change.

But in the last four years, we have at least become aware of it. We are now beginning to see that the impact of new and peaceful techniques of production on unplanned societies, unwilling and unprepared to receive them, is a fact at least as important—and possibly as perilous—as the nuclear bomb. In nuclear warfare, statesmen can purchase a stalemate and so push the bomb out of the way, preventing it from detonating. But urban expansion is detonating every day, owing to the absence of adequate town planning; and the population growth caused by improved health services is causing havoc because of a lack of family planning. All these forces are exploding in a society which drags along behind science and technology, unable to adapt itself to them. The question forced upon us is how we can become the masters, not the slaves, of technological change.

DIRECTLY this question was asked at Scarborough recently, we realised that here was the new, creative Socialist idea needed to reconcile the Revisionists of the Right with the Traditionalists of the Left. Harold Wilson succeeded

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where Hugh Gaitskell failed because he did not propose a substitute for the old Socialism. Instead he offered a reaffirmation of its traditional moral and political arguments in ultra-modern terms. The basic moral case, for example, has always been the outrageous fact of the two nations—one poor, one affluent—living alongside each other. Socialists have always maintained that a society of this kind is intolerable because it is unjust: it will only be made just when the privileges of the minority are transformed into the rights of every citizen.

This traditional moral argument becomes not less but more powerful in a period when technology can double the standard of living in a dozen years. True, mass poverty has been abolished in the U.S.A., where only 30 per cent are now living in agrarian squalor, and in the blighted areas of the towns. But an affluent majority which permits a third of its fellow citizens to exist on the poverty line is not morally superior to the old affluent oligarchy which used to permit 70 per cent of its citizens to die in squalor. On the contrary! The fact that poverty can now be abolished altogether makes the fact that it is tolerated in the U.S.A. even more scandalous. This country, too, is rapidly moving towards a situation where a majority of the population is living well and improving its living standards year by year. But the affluence achieved during the Tory decade only strengthens the case for Labour's New Deal plan to abolish poverty in the midst of plenty by means of modern social security.

The traditional political case for socialism can also be restated in new scientific terms. Democracy, R. H. Tawney told us just after World War I, is "about power"—how to make power responsible, how to tame it by public controls. Parliamentary institutions can be democratised by universal suffrage; but that leaves the problem of economic power unsolved.

Exactly how economic power must be tamed (how much public ownership, for example, will be involved) is a secondary question. The basic principle is that power must be made accountable, and that principle has been strengthened—not weakened—by the increasing rate of technological change, and the consequent concentration of economic power.

BUT NOW, to the traditional moral and the traditional political, has been added a new scientific case for socialist planning. Nothing will halt the scientific and technological revolution under which we live. And in this case, a community which does not take control of these forces is doomed to suicide, either by the nuclear weapon or by one of the other disastrous explosions which occur when these new technologies are injected into an unplanned society, unattuned to change. Even the Government has been forced to face up to it: the creation of NEDC and the publication of the Buchanan Report are evidence of that.

History now requires of each industrialised nation a continuous and purposive adaptation to its environment. And this means that our British Establishment must become "science-based." Throughout this century, it has been not only unscientific in its outlook and in its education, but actively hostile to science and technology. Out of our 625 M.P.s in this Parliament, I reckon we have under 20 with any scientific qualification (and among them are listed neither the Minister for Science nor his Shadow!). This is not the first time this kind of educational inadequacy has characterised the ruling class in British history. At the beginning of the modern age (say, in the 15th century) literacy was just about as rare in Parliament as numeracy is to-day. In those days, the sound, sensible men of affairs who ran the country regarded the clerks on whose reading and writing they relied, with a mixture of envy and suspicion and were determined to maintain them as a small élite circle so as to keep them well under their thumbs. In due course that changed; and the modern state came into being when it was found necessary to require literacy of the ruling class. We shall only be able to talk of a modernised Britain when numeracy as well as literacy becomes a requirement of the ruling class.

WHAT IS ENORMOUSLY exciting is the realisation that we are now living in the precise epoch in British history when this requirement will have to be met. The Labour Government which we are determined shall be in power within a matter of months may well be the first science-based government this country has ever known.

Over the last year, it has been my job to organise the working parties that have been studying how science and technology can be applied under a Labour Government. It has been an immensely exhilarating experience, because of the astonishing stream of talent that

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has come pouring in as soon as we made it clear that we were not preaching to scientists and technologists but asking them for active help.

Already, however, I see two dangers in the success we have achieved. First, that we should be tempted to "sell science" to the electorate as a "gimmick" which the Labour Government would be able to employ in order to solve all its problems; that sort of talk would of course be pure political claptrap. Suppose, for a moment, that we have won the election; carried out our plans for making our existing ministries science-based; established a new ministry with the function of injecting government-financed Research & Development into the economy on the massive scale at present reserved for military R. & D.; suppose, finally, that the new Premier has organised scientific intelligence sufficiently thoroughly to select the three or four points where a first attack would be launched. Even so, even when all this has been accomplished, it would be five years at least before any concrete results could be expected. There are no short-term economic advantages which accrue from bringing the scientists into Whitehall, and the sooner this is made clear to the general public, the less danger there will be of science being perverted into one of those political fads which become the mode and then are equally rapidly discarded.

The second danger we have to avoid is a very simple piece of self-deception which is often offered to us by the scientists themselves. The main thing wrong with Whitehall, they say, is its "anti-scientific bias." Scientists and technologists are deliberately kept out of all the key positions which are reserved overwhelmingly for professional administrators with a non-scientific (or an anti-scientific) bias; and even in Ministries where scientists are employed, they are segregated and treated as technical experts with no direct access to the Minister.

There is of course some truth in this complaint, as indicated by the following from *Hansard*:

> MR. BOYDEN: to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many assistant principals in the Civil Service have degrees in scientific subjects, and what proportion these form of that grade.
>
> MR. BOYD-CARPENTER: 14, which is 7 per cent of the grade.

Obviously there are some areas of government administration where the scientists are in a relatively good position. They have no complaint, for example, against the standing accorded to them in the Ministry of Defence; nor has anybody suggested that they cannot get the ear of the Minister. The same seems true of the DSIR, of the Ministry of Aviation, and of the Ministry of Works (as it has been recently reconstructed under Mr. Rippon).

But when all is said and done, the sections of Whitehall where the scientist is given a hearing are extremely limited. There are many Ministries which need scientific advisers on their Establishment that have not got them, and there are many more where the anti-scientific attitude of the higher Civil Servants prevents the Minister from really understanding the nature of a problem before he comes to his decision. The Labour Government will have to remedy both these defects; (*1*) immediately, it must see that professional scientific advice is available in every Ministry wherever it is required throughout Whitehall; and (2) it must ensure, as a matter of long-term policy, that a steadily increasing proportion of the posts at Assistant Secretary and Permanent Secretary level are held by Civil Servants with a scientific (and not with an exclusively arts) background.

NEVERTHELESS, TO TALK AS THOUGH all we needed in order to put Whitehall right is to inject a lot of natural scientists into key positions in the Ministries is to disregard what is really wrong. The more rapid the rate of technological change to which Government is subjected, the more urgent will be the need to maintain a permanent cadre of professional administrators who can combine very high intellectual calibre with absolute incorruptibility. I would hope that when we get the balance between Arts and Sciences in our schools and universities right, we shall be able to achieve not only a fair balance between scientists and humanists at the top of the Civil Service, but also a new kind of Civil Servant whose general education is both scientific and humane. Meanwhile, we must make do with the cadres we have. The one thing which would certainly undermine the morale and the efficiency of our Civil Service would be the fear that a Labour Government intended to replace a large number of our senior permanent administrators with scientific experts of its own choosing. By doing this, we should destroy the morale of the Civil Service without any assurance of improving its efficiency. For what is wrong to-day is not merely the lack of natural scientists in Whitehall but the fact that

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specialist knowledge of all kinds—whether of natural science or of social science or even of human psychology—fails to get through to the politicians in time to influence the decisions that are being made.

If we are to make Whitehall responsive to technological and social change, the problem we have to solve is how to marry a permanent Civil Service with outside expertise. And this problem of getting the expert analysis through to the top Civil Servant and to the Minister has been greatly complicated by the change in the organisation of Whitehall that has taken place since 1918. Before World War I, the various departments were more or less specialised. A young man recruited to the Board of Education expected to stay there all his life, and his best chance of becoming a head of a department was to work his way up to the Permanent Secretaryship of the Board. The situation began to be transformed on September 14th, 1919, when Lloyd George decided to unify the Service and to recognise the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury as Head of the Civil Service. Since then, the consent of the Prime Minister and the Head of the Civil Service has been required to vital appointments in all Whitehall departments, and the departmental Minister has retained not the rights of selection but merely of proposal and veto.

The effect of this change was two-fold. In the first place, the appointment of outside experts to important jobs in the departments became increasingly rare. The key positions were all manned by men who had been promoted within the Civil Service and for whom it had been a life career. Secondly, the heads of departments were no longer normally recruited from inside the department. "Specialism" had become the characteristic of the second-class administrator, and the top-most positions had been reserved for the "trained mind," the professional administrator who can run any department equally well.

And so we have seen the emergence of the Whitehall Mandarin—the pure professional administrator without specialist knowledge or specialist interest.

I WAS BROUGHT up on Plato. But the part of Platonic philosophy I always doubted was the doctrine of philosopher-kings. I doubted it before the scientific revolution really got under way, and I must say my doubts are even stronger to-day. Was it really wise to permit Whitehall to be dominated by a single type, trained to suit the requirements of a highly centralised bureaucracy, and each of them confident that, if the word is given, he can move from, say, the Ministry of Transport to become head of the Ministry of Education, knowing his capacity to do the job? I cannot help wondering whether the combination of the anti-scientific bias which he has so often acquired at school or university with the anti-specialist bias which was a factor, at least, in the obtaining of his promotion in Whitehall, provides the ideal conditions under which he would be inclined to welcome new ideas coming from outside.

Nevertheless, the centralising revolution in Whitehall has been completed; and it is unlikely that it will ever be reversed. What we have to evolve are ways of getting new ideas and new techniques from the outside world to the professional administrator, and it would be foolish to pretend that we can achieve this by a stroke of the pen or a verbal declaration. Certainly the problem will not be solved simply by saying that more of the permanent Civil Service shall be science-trained.

Is the problem then insoluble? Of course not. It was solved in part during World War I; it was solved completely during World War II. In every war, we maintain our cadres of professional Civil Servants, and then introduce temporary Civil Servants from outside to achieve the victory which would be impossible by running the country along the old peace-time lines. New ideas stream in to Whitehall, new procedures are adopted. University dons who had previously shown only a capacity for Latin verse or philosophical speculation suddenly reveal extraordinary powers of administration. Business executives show that they can put country before self-interest. From all over Britain, the best people are found to win the war.

Between 1940 and 1945, Britain was probably the best-governed country in the world. Our centrally planned economy achieved far more with far fewer resources than the modified *laissez-faire* of the U.S.A. and was infinitely more efficient as well as more humane than the totalitarian planning of either Germany or the Soviet Union. The reason for our success was, first, that we were able to construct our war economy around the firm scaffolding of a professional Civil Service; and second, that we were able to make it flexible and open to innovation by introducing into Whitehall an army of outsiders, uninhibited by Civil Service pro-

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cedures, or by any desire to remain in government after the war was over.

Of course, appalling mistakes were made. But our wartime administration was, in the truest sense of the word, science-based—and also social-science-based.

The conclusion is inescapable. In the technological revolution to which we are now committed, we shall be in a state of permanent emergency in which we shall permanently need the marriage of established Civil Service and outside expertise that we developed as a temporary expedient in World War I and perfected in World War II.

THE KIND of planning we require now, however, is very different from the siege economy which was developed after 1940, with its single narrow objective and its negative controls designed to stop production of anything except weapons and the necessities for survival. Because we shall not rely on rationing either of raw materials or of consumer goods; because we shall not employ direction of labour; because we shall take account of changes in consumer taste, both at home and overseas, our peace-time planners must evolve a flexibility and a sensitivity to consumer demand both at home and abroad which set them completely apart from the planners of the wartime and post-war epochs.

But there *are* two ways in which peace-time planning resembles war-time planning. (*1*) It requires definition of clearly-defined targets to which the community's efforts can be directed; and (2) it can only be successfully achieved by the systematic use of scientific methods both in the investigation which precedes selection of the aims, and in the plans worked out in order to achieve them. Fifty years ago, when the rate of technological change was still relatively slow, scientific planning of this kind was unnecessary; now, it has become a necessity of survival. This is why we now need, in peace as well as in war, the constant reinvigoration of our professional administrators in Whitehall from outside.

PARTLY THIS CAN BE DONE by greatly strengthening the professional scientists already in government service (ensuring, for example, that the Chief Scientific Adviser in each Ministry has direct access to the Minister). But if our aim is to ensure that all government policy is science-based, and that Ministers make their decisions upon the very best information available, it is not sufficient merely to increase the number of whole-time scientists working in government departments. We must also stimulate a steady movement between government and the universities, the universities and industry, and industry and government, so as to ensure that the rigid procedures of the professional administrator are rendered flexible by constant contact with outside realities. (Although on much too small a scale, a circulation of this kind has already been achieved in the Ministry of Defence: we must extend it to every area of government activity; and we can be sure that everybody will be a gainer.) The vitality of our academic research will undoubtedly be increased if leading university scientists, social scientists, economists, and administrators, as a matter of regular routine, spend two or three years on contract to the government in Whitehall, and perhaps another period of two or three years working in industry as well. The same is true of industry. Here, too, new links must be created with government on the one side and the universities on the other, and the best way to do this is by ensuring a regular interchange of personnel.[2]

A SHARP INCREASE in the size and in the status of our scientific Civil Service; a full recognition of the vital role of the outside specialist on temporary assignment to Whitehall—these two measures should provide us with the manpower required to ensure that Government adapts its thought and its procedures to technological change, that "planning is science-based," and that Cabinet decisions are arrived at on the basis of a scientifically-assessed intelligence.

[2] But if we want to enable our temporary Civil Servant to play a role in peacetime planning as creative as he played in wartime Whitehall, we must make his transfer as easy as possible. Obviously it is impossible ever to achieve equality of salaries. But I suspect that the kind of man we want will be prepared for the two or three years of his contract to sacrifice considerable economic advantages for the sake of the experience of government that he gains. But one thing he cannot be expected to sacrifice is his pension rights; and that is why the Labour Party has included in its new Social Security plan a demand that pension rights should be made fully transferable. So long as it is only the employees' contributions which are returned if he decides to move to a new job, superannuation will remain a major obstacle to that mobility—especially among professional men and women—which it is essential to maintain if we are to adapt Whitehall to the modern pace of change.

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BUT WHAT exactly do I mean by "scientifically-assessed intelligence"? Fortunately, an answer to this question has been given us recently in the Robbins Report. It seems to me that this Report is epoch-making, far less for its recommendations—the more I look at them, the more dubious I find many of them—than for the appendices in which the evidence on which those recommendations are based is presented to us. Of course, there have been plenty of previous Committees which published the facts and calculations on which they based their findings. But the Robbins Committee is surely the first which made the bold attempt to look twenty years ahead to assess the rate of growth in terms of population, requirements, and resources, and so to work out a scientifically-phased and -costed plan of expansion.

What Robbins showed was that a Government which is prepared to rely on modern techniques of social investigation and statistical analysis can plan well into the future without relying on mere guesswork. Of course this kind of planning is still in its infancy; and so are the techniques for amassing the collection of the intelligence on which it is based. But there seems to me no inherent difficulty to prevent the next Labour Government rapidly creating an organisation which will ensure that its decisions in other fields will be as demonstrably "science-based" as the decisions this Government has been able to base on the work of the Robbins Committee.

In this context, however, it is important to realise that first-rate scientific intelligence is not only produced by scientists or even by social scientists. What is needed is a team, a mixture of talents, derived from the ranks of the professional administrators, the social scientists, statisticians, economists, natural scientists, and technologists. One of the most important qualities of a Minister in future will be an ability to pick teams of this sort, capable of carrying out the social investigation which will enable him to undertake really sensitive and accurate planning. It seems to me that this organisation of scientifically prepared intelligence in industry, in the departments of Whitehall, and finally—and most important of all—in the central Ministry of Production, will be the most important application of science in Government which a Labour Cabinet will have to undertake.

Paddington Receives Us

If then we try
the air of afternoon
how gently silver
how galore is Spring.
Paddington receives us
like a familiar friend
tapping his cane on
the gate. Pleasant—
pleasant to walk
along the towpath
or nowhere

In mauve, blue and red
the dark street winks
as the Off Li-
cence turns on . . .
. . . Hands in lapel
the law strolls by
neat as a toy
nor thinking of me
his filter too coarse
for my sordid germ
(none the less strong.)
—I want to run
I want to change
his face like a wall;
the pink colours die
across the canal.

Howard Griffin

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Jorge Luis Borges

Man of the Red Corner

DON'T TALK to me about the late Francisco Real. I knew him, and I knew this wasn't his district because he was a big shot around the Norte, over towards the Guadalupe lake and the Batería. I only met him three times, and all three on the same night. But that's a night I won't forget because the Lujanera came to sleep at my shack uninvited and Rosendo Juárez left the Arroyo for good and all. You won't recognise his name, of course. You're not the kind who would know about these things. Rosendo Juárez, "the Knife," had one of the toughest reputations in Villa San Rita. He was a handy lad with the steel. One of Don Nicholás Paredes' gang, you know, and Paredes was one of Morel's lot. He'd arrive, dressed up to the nines, at the whore-house, on a black horse with silver harness. Men and dogs respected him, and so did the girls. Everyone knew that he had two deaths to his credit. He used to wear a high slouch hat with a braided brim on his long greased hair. He was fortune's darling, as they say, and we Villa lads used to imitate him even to the way he spat. But just one night showed us what Rosendo was made of.

The story of that very odd night begins, believe it or not, with a red-wheeled carriage, packed to the brim, suddenly jolting down those baked mud roads between the brick-kilns and the waste lots. Two men in black were capering and strumming the guitar, and the fellow on the box was cracking his whip at the stray dogs that got under his horse's feet. Sitting quietly in the middle was a man in a poncho. This was the famous Corralero, and he'd come to fight and kill. The night was cool as the breath of heaven; and two of them were riding on the folded hood as if that god-forsaken spot was a carnival way. This was event number one. There were plenty to follow, and it wasn't long before we knew it. Our bunch had come to Julia's early. She had a big shanty built of corrugated zinc between the Camino de

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: *"Man of the Red Corner" is one of Borges' principal contributions to the mythology of Buenos Aires. Some of his other stories describe the city without naming it. This one is set in the region where the middle-class suburb of Palermo was afterwards built, the suburb in which Borges passed his youth. The knifeman, Francisco Real, comes from Borges' favourite Norte—actually not the north but the east side of the city—which runs down to the docks and out to the slaughterhouses where Real must once have worked, for he uses the language of the stockyards. He is* El Corralero, *the man from the cattle-stockades, though* Los Corrales *was at that time a shanty town also. The girl,* La Lujanera, *takes her name from Luján, a little town not far from Buenos Aires, which contains the prilgrimage church of Our Lady of Luján.*

Borges says that he wrote this history in a hotel bedroom "under the influence of Sternberg's films and R. L. Stevenson's stories." He claims that the anecdote is authentic, and that while preserving the characters' rough language he has subjected it to a scenic and choreographic technique. He has also foreshortened it. A fight between knifemen would, he explains, have begun less abruptly; flattery followed by mockery would have preceded the challenge. To preserve tension, however, he has cut short the preliminaries. The story takes its title from the lamp outside Julia's shanty. J. M. COHEN

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Gauna and the Maldonado. It was a place you could recognise from afar by the flagrant lamp and the shindy. Although Julia had Indian blood she was very careful and conscientious. There were always musicians there, and good drink, and tough, long-suffering dancing-partners. By far the best of the lot was Rosendo's woman, La Lujanera. She's dead, sir, and I'll confess there are years when I don't give her a thought. But you should have seen her in her prime, with those eyes of hers. She made the blood quicken in your veins.

The *caña*, the dancing, the females, a condescending oath from Rosendo and a slap in the crowd that I tried to take as friendly —the fact is I was extremely happy. I struck a partner who followed me like a bird. She seemed to guess my intentions. The tango got us under its spell. It drove us, overpowered us, sorted us out and then picked us up again. The men were immersed in the dance, as if in a dream, when I suddenly noticed that the music seemed to get louder. In fact it was swollen and confused with the music of the two guitar-players in the carriage, which was steadily coming nearer. Then the wind that carried it blew it in the other direction, and my attention returned to my body and my partner's and our conversation as we danced. After some time there came a commanding knock at the door, a knock and a shout. There was a general silence. Then the door received a powerful push and the man was inside. The man was like his voice.

For us he was not yet Francisco Real, but a tall, stout fellow dressed all in black with a scarf the colour of a bay thrown over one shoulder. He had, I remember, angular Indian features.

THE FLAP OF THE DOOR hit me as it opened and, in sheer confusion, I threw myself on him, shoving my left fist in his face while with my right I drew the sharp-edged knife I carried in the open seam of my waistcoat, under my left arm. My attack was quickly cut short. The man stretched out his arms to steady himself and thrust me aside as if pushing away an obstacle. He left me cowering, with my hand still under my coat grasping my useless weapon, and forged ahead as if nothing had happened. He forged ahead, always taller than the men whom he continued to thrust aside as if he didn't see them. The first of them—gaping Italian louts—opened up like a fan, stiff with fright. But this did not go on. In the next bunch the Englishman was waiting for him and, before he felt the stranger's hand on his shoulder, dealt him a blow with the flat of his hand, which he had raised. You should have seen that blow, and how they all rushed up. The shanty ran a long way back, and they harried him like a martyr from one end to the other, shoving him and whistling and spitting at him. At first they punched him. Then, seeing that he didn't stop their blows, they just slapped him or flicked him harmlessly with their scarves, as if in fun. But he took no notice. He was saving his strength for Rosendo, who had not moved all this time from the back wall, against which he was leaning, quite silent. He puffed his cigarette in fright, as if he realised what we only saw later. El Corralero was thrusting his way towards him, resolute and bleeding, with the noise of that mocking rabble at his back. Hissed and lashed and dirty with spit, he did not speak until he confronted Rosendo. Then he looked at him, wiped his face with his sleeve, and spoke:

"I'm Francisco Real from the Norte. I'm Francisco Real, whom they call El Corralero. I've let these bastards maul me because what I'm looking for is a man. I've heard rumours that there's someone in these parts called 'the Knife.' Boasters around here say he's a wicked one with the steel. I want to meet him. I want him to teach me something. I'm just nothing, and I want to learn from him what a man with guts and a quick eye can do."

He didn't take his eyes off Rosendo all the time he was speaking, and a big knife flashed in his hand. No doubt he'd been hiding it in his sleeve. The men who had been shoving him opened up all round, and we all stared

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at the two of them in complete silence. Even the blind mulatto who was playing the violin turned his blubber lips in their direction.

JUST THEN I heard some movements at the back, and saw six or seven men framed in the doorway. They must have been El Corralero's gang. The oldest of them, a weather-beaten peasant-looking man with a grizzled moustache, came in but stopped, dazzled by all the females and the light, and respectfully took off his hat. The others stood by, ready to go in and fight in case of foul play.

What was the matter with Rosendo that he didn't hustle and trample on this braggart? He kept quiet and did not raise his eyes. I don't know whether he spat out his cigarette or if it fell from his lips. Finally he stammered a few words, but so softly that we at the other end of the room couldn't hear what he said. Francisco Real challenged him again, and once more he refused to fight. Then the youngest of the strangers whistled. La Lujanera gave him a look of hatred and with her hair swinging over either shoulder, made her way between the girls and the men from the carriage. She went up to her man, put her hand under his coat, took out his bare knife, and gave it to him, saying:

"I think you'll be needing this, Rosendo."

At roof height there was a sort of long window that overlooked the stream. Rosendo took the knife in both hands and looked at it as if he didn't recognise it. He leant sharply backwards and the knife flew straight out, to sink in the Maldonado outside. I felt something like a shiver.

"I won't foul my knife with you," said El Corralero and lifted his hand to strike him. Then the Lujanera seized the stranger, threw her arms round his neck, looked at him with those eyes of hers and said in fury:

"Let him be, this bastard who pretended he was a man."

For a moment Francisco Real was undecided. Then he embraced her as if for ever, called to the musicians to play a tango and *milonga*, and to the rest of the party to dance. The dancing ran wild from one end of the room to the other. Real danced very solemnly, and without the dash you would have expected. When he came to the door he shouted:

"Out of the way, fellows! She's coming in a dream."

As he spoke, they went out as if on the swell of the tango, as if lost in the tango.

I must have flushed with shame. I made a turn or two with some woman, then brusquely left her standing. I made the excuse that it was hot and there was too much crush, and edged along the wall to the door. It was a lovely night. But for whom? At the corner of the road stood the carriage with a couple of guitars standing upright on the seat like human beings. It began to gall me that they'd left them out there as if we weren't worth their bringing them in. It infuriated me to feel that we were trash. I pulled the carnation from behind my ear and threw it in a puddle. Then I stared at it for a bit as if to avoid thinking of anything else. I should have liked to-morrow to have come at that moment, I wanted that night to be over. Then someone hit me with his elbow, which was almost a relief. It was Rosendo sneaking off alone out of that district.

"Why are you always in the way, one-ball?" he muttered. I don't know whether he wanted to vent his feelings or what. He clung to the dark side, along the Maldonado, and I never saw him again.

I STOOD looking at the things I'd seen all my life, the sky stretching on for ever, the stream persistently flowing down there, a horse asleep, the mud road, the kilns, and I thought I was just another weed in these parts, that had grown up along the toad-flax and the bones. What could come out of this mud except us, bawlers who piped down when we were beaten, mouths good only to shout abuse? Later on I felt, No, the more broken-down the district the more guts you had to have. Muck? The dancing went on like mad, and there was a shindy in the other houses too, and the wind brought the scent of honey-

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suckle. The night was lovely, but to no purpose. There were so many stars that it made you giddy to look at them, stars one above the other. I tried hard to feel that the whole business had nothing to do with me, but I couldn't get Rosendo's cowardice and that stranger's unbearable courage out of my head. The tall stranger had even managed to get himself a woman for the night. For to-night, I thought, and for many nights and perhaps for ever, for La Lujanera was worth having. God knows which way they'd gone. They couldn't be far off. Perhaps the pair of them were at it now in some ditch.

When I finally went back the dancing was going on as noisily as if nothing had happened. Making myself small, I slipped into the crowd and found that some of our bunch had sloped off and the Norte gang were tangoing with the others. There was no pushing or colliding. Everyone was careful and polite. The music seemed drowsy, and the girls who were dancing with the boys from the Norte hardly opened their mouths.

I expected something, but not what happened.

We heard a woman crying outside, and then a voice that we recognised. But it was soft, almost too soft. It might have been anyone's voice that said to her:

"Go in, girl"—then there was another sob. The voice sounded as if it were beginning to lose patience.

"Open the door, I tell you! Open it, you slut! Open it, you bitch!" At this the rattling door opened and La Lujanera came in alone. She came in as if driven, as if possessed by someone.

"She's possessed by a ghost," said the Englishman.

"A dead man, friend," said El Corralero. His face looked like a drunkard's. He came in, and in the space we all made for him as before he took some tottering steps—tall and sightless—then fell straight down like a log. One of the chaps who had come with him turned him on his back and folded his poncho under his head. Then the blood welled up, and we saw that he had a deep wound in the chest; the blood was spreading and darkening his red vest, which I hadn't seen before because it was covered by his scarf. To bring him round one of the women fetched *caña* and some burnt rags. The man was in no state to explain. La Lujanera looked at him in bewilderment with her arms hanging at her sides. Surprise was written on everyone's face. Finally she managed to speak. She said that when they had left together, she and El Corralero had gone to a little field, and someone she didn't know had turned up there and wildly challenged him to fight, and given him this stab. She swore that she didn't know who the man was and that it wasn't Rosendo. But who was going to believe that?

THE MAN AT OUR FEET was dying. I thought that whoever had dealt him that blow had a steady hand, for he was a tough fellow. When he had knocked, Julia had been serving *mâté*, and the bowl went right round until it reached me before he passed away. "Cover my face," he said slowly when he was at his last gasp. All that was left was his pride, and he wasn't going to have them watch his dying grimaces. Somebody put his black high-crowned hat over him, and he died under his hat without a moan. When his prone chest had stopped rising and falling they plucked up courage to uncover him. He had that weary look that dead men have; he was one of the bravest men there were in those days between the Batería and the Sur. When I saw that he was dead and could not speak I stopped hating him.

"Death doesn't ask for much, except a life," said one of the bunch, and another added thoughtfully:

"So much pride in a man, and all he's good for now is to collect flies." The chaps from the Norte were talking quietly among themselves. Then two of them spoke out together:

"It was the woman killed him."

One of them shouted the accusation in her face, and they all clustered round her. Then I forgot that I had to be careful and was among them in a flash. I was so mad that I nearly pulled out my knife. I saw that

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many of them, perhaps all of them, were looking at me. I said almost lazily:

"Look at this woman's hands. How could she have the strength or the nerve to stab a man?"

Then I added with a sort of elegant disdain:

"They say the dead man was a tough character in his own district. Who'd ever have thought he would end up in a dirty way like this, and in this dead and alive hole where nothing happens until someone comes from outside for some fun and stays for a scrap?"

Nobody offered his hide for a beating.

Then we heard a sound of horses approaching in the silence. It was the police. One way and another, they must all have had their reasons for wanting to avoid an encounter. For they decided that the best thing to do would be to throw the dead man into the stream. You remember the long window through which the knife flashed and fell? Well the man in black followed it not long afterwards. Several of them lifted him and, after relieving him of the coins and trifles in his pockets, tied his hands. One of them had chopped off his finger first though, to pinch his ring. They made good use of their chances, sir. They were brave enough to rob a poor defenceless corpse once someone who was more of a man had settled him. One heave, and the ready torrent waters received him. I expect they cut out his guts to stop him from floating, but I preferred not to look. The man with the grey moustache never took his eyes off me. La Lujanera made use of this alarm to get away.

When the officers of the law looked in the dancing was quite lively. The blind musician was squeezing the sort of Habaneras out of his fiddle that you don't hear any more. Outside, it was beginning to get light. Some mimosa-wood posts stood out on a hill, seemingly unconnected because you couldn't see the thin wire between them so early.

I went quietly off to my shack. A little light was shining in the window but quickly went out. I swear to you I hurried when I saw it. Then, Borges, I took out my knife again, the short, sharp knife I always carried here in my waistcoat under my left armpit. I gave it another look. It was like new, innocent, without the slightest trace of blood on it.

Lament

Clouds near night flow north
Whirling me down like snow
Soundless into wild sea
Howl wind of ice through me

Yet blithely but a moon ago
Love laughed upon the tide
Cast me where I will not know
Let lilies heal my side

Samuel Menashe

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Luigi Barzini

Benito Mussolini

Nobody knows his servants as badly as their master; nobody knows his subjects as badly as their ruler; because they do not show themselves as they do to others; they always strive to disguise themselves and to seem different from what they truly are. FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI

AN OLD SOCIALIST from Bologna, Aldo Parini, a modest man, who had been a good friend of Benito Mussolini in the early days, asked to see him just before the last war. Il Duce received him at the Palazzo Venezia. Parini had nothing to ask for himself; he had a job, and was no longer interested, he said, in politics. He pleaded with the dictator, however, to help some of their ancient comrades, brave and honest men who had fought, with them, the socialist battles at the beginning of the century, and who were now penniless, unable to get a job, and persecuted by the police. Could he not give orders to leave them in peace so that they could make a living? Could he not perhaps assign the oldest and poorest of them a small pension out of secret funds? Mussolini liked playing the magnanimous and generous prince. He reassured his old comrade that all he was asking for would be done, and took down the names of the needy socialists. Then he started talking about things in general.

"He was dressed in a white linen suit. It was summer. His face was sunburned," the old socialist told me years later, after Mussolini's death. "He swaggered, made faces, pushed his chin forward, bent his knees, hands on hips, as cavalry officers used to do, all in good humour. He recalled some forgotten mutual friends. He boasted about the achievements of his régime. I said nothing. Then he told me: 'You are a stubborn fool, not becoming one of us. Why don't you join the Fascist Party?' I felt that if I had said yes, I was tired of living apart from the rest of my countrymen, he would have given me a party card then and there. It would have solved many problems. I wanted, however, to be true to my youth, and said no, I was happy as I was and needed nothing. He insisted. Finally I blurted out what was in my mind. I said: 'This régime of yours, I am afraid, will end badly. Such things always do. Benito, you'll die like Cola di Rienzo.'[1] At these words, which I meant seriously but said in a facetious tone, Mussolini made one of his grimaces, expressing mock horror, then laughed and looked at his hands, spread out in front of him, fingers wide apart, the thick and short hands of a peasant. What he said I will never forget. He said: 'I wear no rings, you see. It will not happen to me....'"

MUSSOLINI WAS BORN at Dovia di Predappio, near Forli, in Romagna, on July 29, 1883. His father was a blacksmith, an ardent revolutionary (a "primeval socialist," as somebody called him), who named his first-born Benito after Benito Juarez, the Mexican leader of the rebellion against Maximilian; his mother was a long-suffering schoolteacher. He was brought up hating the Church, the army, the king, the *carabinieri*, the law, the rich, the well-educated, the well-washed, the successful, any kind of authority, many of the things he was later to defend, and to hate at times even the proletarian revolutionaries who disappointed him: he

[1] Cola di Rienzo (1313–1354), called by Bulwer-Lytton "the last of the Roman tribunes," failed in a second attempt to hold power and tried to escape from Capitol Hill; he was recognised by his golden jewellery, was killed and hung by his feet. Byron dedicated a part of *Childe Harold* to him; Wagner composed the opera *Rienzi*; and d'Annunzio compiled his biography. In Napoleon's carriage, as he trudged his way back from Moscow, there was a copy of a book called *Conjuration de Nicholas, dit de Rienzi* (Paris, 1733).

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often called them "socialist noodles." He was a turbulent boy, determined to be first in everything, proud, quarrelsome, boastful, superstitious and not always very brave. A friendly biographer wrote: "He picked quarrels for the sake of the fight; when he won at games he wanted more than the stake, when he lost he refused to pay." He was expelled from two schools for having knifed two school-mates. Many of his companions hated him. A few loved him dearly, almost fanatically, and followed him as their leader. Old men in Romagna still remember his harsh childish charm, his winning smiles, and his fierce loyalty to his friends and followers. He was always persuaded that a great destiny was reserved for him. "One day," he said to his mother when he was still a boy, "I will make the earth tremble." He did.

He became a school-teacher in 1901. The following year he fled to Switzerland to avoid conscription: it was at the time a duty for a serious revolutionary. In Lausanne he tried, once or twice, actually to become a member of the working class by getting a job as a labourer but discovered that he did not like hard work. He much preferred reading revolutionary literature and talking. He read voraciously and indiscriminately, mostly pre-Marxist or non-Marxist rebels, including Nietzsche, Sorel, and Schopenhauer. Of Marx he apparently read only the *Manifesto*. He preached indiscriminate violence—atheism, class warfare, the "myth of the general strike," and revolution for revolution's sake—to his countrymen, mostly poor immigrant bricklayers, who were so impressed they elected him secretary of their trade union. He sought the company of other revolutionaries who were at the time mostly Russian nihilists, anarchists, and social democrats. They called him familiarly Benitushka; he called himself more dramatically an "apostle of violence."

He never washed, shaved seldom, wore his thinning hair long on his neck and lived wherever he could. Once he inhabited an abandoned packing case under a bridge together with a young girl. The police watched him and arrested him several times. Angelica Balabanova, the Russian socialist, befriended him and was charmed by him for a time. She understood that, under the blustering, blasphemous and rebellious talk, he was a timid man, uneasy when in the presence of people he suspected to be his social or intellectual superiors. In reality he watched himself playing the great role he was inventing as he went along, hamming at it with gusto; no earnest revolutionary in Switzerland at the time was as visibly frightening as he was. Certainly not Lenin, who diligently impersonated the role of a little professor.

Mussolini returned to Italy in 1904; an heir had been born to the King and so an amnesty had been granted. He became a village schoolteacher, served in the Army as a *bersagliere* (he turned out to be a good soldier, after all), earned a new diploma as teacher of French in high schools, and did odd jobs as a journalist, socialist agitator and organiser. He began to improve his oratory, slowly developing a technique which was to make him one of the best and most moving speakers in Italy. He paid little attention to the logic and truth of what he said as long as it was energetic and stirring. His gestures had rhythm and vigour. He used short, staccato sentences, with no clear connection between them, often with long and dramatic pauses, sometimes changing voice and expression in a crescendo of violence and ending in a tornado of vituperations. When his audience was carried away by his oratory he would sometimes stop and put to them a rhetorical question. They roared their answer. This established a sort of heated dialogue, through which the spectators became involved in decisions they had no time to meditate on. By means of violent writings and incendiary eloquence, he rose in the socialist party organisation until, by 1912, he was made editor of the party organ, *Avanti!*

He was a very successful editor. The paper's circulation rose from 50,000 copies to 200,000 under his leadership. The role of the journalist was one of the few in his life he did not have to act, because he really was one, perhaps the best popular journalist of his day in Italy, addressing himself not to the sober cultured minority, but to the practically illiterate masses, easily swept by primitive emotions. Those very qualities which made him an excellent rabble-rousing editor made him a disastrous statesman: his intuitive and superficial intelligence; his capacity to oversimplify and dramatise; a day-by-day interest only for the most striking events; a strictly partisan point of view; the disregard for truth, accuracy, objectivity and consistency when they interfered with his aims; the talent for doing his job undisturbed by scruples, doubts or criticisms; and above all, an instinctive ability to ride the emotional wave of the day, whatever it was, to

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know what people wanted to be told, and by what low collective passions they would easily be swept away. If the Italians had been a newspaper-reading public like the English, *Avanti!* would have easily reached a circulation of two or three million copies. As it was, 200,000 was considered a miracle.

He went to live in Milan with his family, which consisted of his common law wife Rachele (socialists at the time refused to acknowledge the existence of Church and State and were "married" without a civil or religious ceremony) who was the very young daughter of his father's mistress, and his little girl, Edda, who looked like him, two large black eyes in a pale and bony face. He was only a little better dressed than the "apostle of violence" of his Lausanne days. He still washed seldom, shaved only twice a week, wore the same suit until it fell to pieces and neglected to tie his shoe-laces. He made strange grimaces when he talked, used violent and unprintable words, had an impatient temper, but managed, as he had done in his schooldays, to attract faithful friends and fanatical followers, some of whom clung to him to the end.

There was something about him that startled and fascinated almost everybody, including some of his enemies. Most people who knew him well, who spoke frequently with him, who worked for him, were the victims of this inexplicable charm. Men literally fell in love with him as if he were a woman, unreasoningly and blindly, ready to forgive him everything, his rudeness, his errors, his lies, his pretentiousness, his obstinacy and his ignorance. One of the men who had worked for him since 1914, Manlio Morgagni, committed suicide in July 1943, after writing these words on a piece of paper: "Il Duce has resigned. My life is finished. Viva Mussolini!" He also attracted many women. He treated them roughly, as he had the peasant girls of Forli, sometimes taking them without preliminary explanations on the hard floor of his study or standing them up against a wall. Only a few of them sensed his timidity, his lack of security, his desire for admiration and affection. Those lasted some time. The others, mesmerised and frightened, were soon dismissed.

MY FIRST IMPRESSION of him, years later in 1932, during some army manœuvres, was a disturbing one. He wore a white yachting cap, a wing collar, the noisette double-breasted coat of a businessman, grey-green army breeches, and black boots. He looked like a circus performer in off hours. Perhaps his clothes were meant to symbolise the multifarious variety of his interests: horses, business, the sea, the economic life of the nation, and the army. He looked small, thick, rude, and stubborn. I remember the large ivory-coloured bald head, the bulging black eyes in the pale face, the protruding jaw, the yellow teeth set wide apart (a sign of good luck, according to popular belief), a little potato-like excrescence on his cranium, and the large black mole under his chin. He moved his arms and legs as a wrestler does to make his clothes fit better.

I wrote in my diary: "He is the engineer at the throttle, we are the passengers on the train. Will he always be able to see if the bridges ahead are still standing or have been washed away? Let us hope for the best." It is true that I had not been exposed to his charms as I had not talked to him. I had merely watched him for days, from a short distance, at army observation posts. He was, of course, playing the role of the man with an indomitable will "WHOM," large black letters on village houses proclaimed at the time throughout Italy, "NEITHER GOD NOR MAN WILL BEND." In reality, he was, as he had always been, obstinate, deaf to criticism, self-willed, suspicious, but also erratic, undecided most of the time, prone to adopt the most recent opinion he heard. He was trying to hide his irresolution and fear. This I was too young and inexperienced to know. I took him at his face value.

He had certainly been irresolute during the fateful summer of 1914. Italy was tied to the Austrian and German empires by the Triple Alliance. The right wing, the conservatives, the general staff, the business and financial interests and the government were in favour of maintaining strict neutrality. The younger people, avant-garde artists, trade unionists, anarchists, students, republicans, democrats, nationalists, the hot-heads of the right, and the more moderate socialists, were all, for different reasons, in favour of war on the side of France and Great Britain. Socialist doctrines, as usual, were no certain guide. Workers should have been against a bourgeois, capitalist war, but they also had a theoretical duty to encourage a catastrophe which would have accelerated the proletarian revolution. The editor of *Avanti!* at first repeated the old slogans, "Down with war! Down with armaments! Long live the

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international brotherhood of workers!" He denounced war-mongers. He organised a referendum among his readers: "Are you for war or peace?" He headed one of his violent articles: "Who drives us to war betrays us." But then the journalist in him wavered, when he felt he would lose followers by supporting the cautious government policy. Pacificism was unpopular with those he wanted to lead, the younger generation of rebels. After a few months, on October 18, 1914, without taking orders from or consulting the party leaders, he published an editorial urging war. He was immediately dismissed from his job and expelled from the party in a stormy session. He walked out crying dramatically: "You hate me because you cannot help loving me!"

WITH FOREIGN AND Italian money, he started a new newspaper of his own, *Popolo d'Italia*, which came out on November 14th. He immediately managed to gather behind him more followers than he had had when editing *Avanti!* and more readers. Italy entered the war on May 24th, 1915. He also went to war, when his class was called, and served well as a corporal in the *bersaglieri*, until he was wounded. (It was noticed that he went about Milan on crutches long after they should have become useless.) After the war, when the frail structure of Italian political unity was endangered by civil strife, economic difficulties and the collapse of the existing method of government, he used his paper to give vent to all the passions, to rally all the hot-headed veterans of all parties who found it difficult to go back to dull civilian pursuits, the very young men who felt they had been cheated by not having been in the war, and all those who had wanted a revolution, any kind of revolution, so long as it was not a socialist and Marxist one. On March 23rd, 1919, in Milan, he founded something called *I Fascii*, a vague but determined organisation which adopted a fiery and contradictory programme, so contradictory in fact that it attracted dissatisfied and restless men from the right and the left, anarchists and conservatives, business men and artists. Arturo Toscanini was one of them. The confusion of the programme reflected the disorderly but brilliant mind of the leader, his lack of principles and his perennial irresolution. Here and there, in other cities, in the provinces, in towns, in villages, bands of young men sprang up, to fight socialists and communists in the streets. The movement quickly found conservative support. Street fighting became a common occurrence.

MUSSOLINI was generally considered the truculent and arrogant leader of all this, the man who rode the storm. In reality, he was secretly reluctant as usual and devoured by doubts; but he put up a good front. The expression on his face was resolute. He scowled and clenched his teeth. His working table at the *Popolo d'Italia* was covered with an arsenal of weapons, hand-grenades, pistols of various calibres, muskets, knives. (He loved weapons until late in his career. In the waiting-room of his study in the Palazzo Venezia there were often a couple of duelling pistols and a couple of duelling sabres, to intimidate his visitors.) His articles bristled with insults for the cautious and timid. He often wore a black shirt, like his followers.[2] He wrote arrogant articles, heaping insults on grave and prudent statesmen, challenging his enemies to fight, forecasting the most glorious future for the party. But he never took a personal part in a street brawl. Manœuvring behind the scenes, skilfully keeping all doors open, he negotiated with the socialists and the conservatives, at the same time as he was fighting them both; with the monarchists and the republicans; with the government and the opposition. His genius was proved above all by the fact that he maintained himself at the head of a mass party composed of many different factions, always managing to defeat all his possible rivals, until practically the very end, twenty-four years later.

None of this was visible from a distance. His public figure was one thing, the fearless leader braving danger at the head of his fighting men, his private figure was another, known only to few. (The discrepancy was naturally known to his wife, Rachele, who later used to complain to him, as one of his sons told me many years ago: "You bend forty million Italians to your will but you are not able to make your own sons obey you.") His vacillating character was well known to the leaders of the party who decided to march on Rome, in October, 1922;

[2] The Italian habit of wearing a shirt of a distinct colour as a political uniform was started by Garibaldi in Montevideo in 1843, who dressed his Italian Legion, then fighting for the independence of Uruguay, with an old stock of unsold red shirts made originally for slaughter-house workers. Black shirts had been used in Italy by workers in the railways, steel mills, and machinery shops.

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Balbo told him: "We are going, either with you or without you. Make up your mind." He remained prudently behind in Milan while the Blackshirts straggled through the rain into the capital, without meeting any opposition. He arrived the next day in a *Wagons-Lits* compartment, after he had been summoned by the King for consultations. He presented himself at the Quirinale symbolically attired in a tight Prince Albert coat he had borrowed, spats and a black shirt, a blend of tradition and revolution. He said: "Your Majesty must excuse me for wearing a black shirt, but I have just returned from the battle which we had to fight, fortunately without shedding any blood...."

THERE IS A disturbing mystery about Mussolini's career. He was dictator of Italy for about two decades, exactly from October 28th, 1922, till July 25, 1943. Two decades is almost the time lag between two generations, the years necessary for schoolchildren to become mature men, and for mature men to become old. He himself was thirty-nine when he took power and sixty only a few days after he had to relinquish it. In the end, he was leading a country different from that in which he took power, a new country which he had shaped according to his wishes, organised according to his theories, staffed by men educated and selected by him and his lieutenants. His powers were limitless: where his legal prerogatives ended, his undisputed authority and immense personal prestige began. He ran the only political party officially in existence, so capillary and widespread that it interfered with the daily habits of millions of people from dawn to dusk and even later at night (he wanted Italians to produce more and more children and granted advantages and prizes to large families), and from the cradle to the tomb. He decided the contents of newspapers, books, magazines, radio programmes, films, encyclopædias. He had no opposition to contend with.

He was sole legislator, judge, censor, policeman, ambassador, general. He was the Head of the Government, President of the Grand Council, President of the Council of Ministers, and, at one time or another, occupied most of the seats around the council table himself. He was on and off, for years, Minister of the Interior, of Foreign Affairs, of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force; he managed economic affairs as Minister of Corporations. The ministries he did not run he controlled indirectly. Everything was conceived by him as a preparation for the ultimate test, the biggest world war ever seen, which he did little to avoid, foresaw with accuracy years before, and practically welcomed. The armed forces he led as commander-in-chief had been organised, trained, and armed by him for the conflict; they were supported by the economic and industrial organisation he had shaped with that sole aim in view; encouraged by the propaganda machine he had invented and run for two decades; led by him during the war, through successive strategic moves, conceived and decided by him and by generals of his own choosing.

He was practically defeated by one man alone, himself. He found himself impotent in front of the overwhelming enemies he had evoked, and of the arrogant ally he had encouraged and cultivated, with the scarce resources he himself had predisposed, the industries he had encouraged, and the weapons he had designed and built. He was left in the lurch by himself as Foreign Minister (his grasp of the world situation had been highly over-optimistic), as Minister of the Armed Forces (he had chosen the wrong commanders, strategies, and weapons), as Minister of the Interior (he overestimated the will of the Italian people to suffer and die for a war they did not understand), as Minister of Propaganda (he had believed his own newspapers), and as Head of the Fascist Party (he glibly thought he had worked out all the answers to the riddles of the modern world).

ITALIAN ARTILLERYMEN in the Western Desert fired Austrian guns of first world war vintage, built by the Skoda works in 1908 or thereabout, against the very modern American and British models. Mussolini lacked raw materials, fuel and food to fight a long war, and he lacked merchant ships with which to supply the far-flung theatres he had chosen to fight in, since many Italian ships in foreign waters, not having been informed about their country's entry into the war, were immediately impounded. His tanks were small, weak, slow, tinny affairs, which could be pierced by machine-gun fire; he had chosen them because they were cheaper and, for the same price, he could have more of them. He said they were faster than the heavier models, more "attuned to the quick reflexes of the Italian soldiers." He had no aircraft carriers. His planes were good but too few to count; he could not replace them fast enough. They

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were clever toys, elegant models laboriously made by hand by ingenious mechanics for peacetime reviews, rather than industrial products which could be turned out fast enough to produce results. His navy, which had somehow managed to run itself for years, was relatively efficient, but certainly not big and advanced enough to stand up to the combined strength of the fleets he attacked. It lacked radar and, what is worse, it never suspected such an invention existed, which made Italian ships sitting ducks for the British, at long range or at night.

The army was at first disciplined and in good spirits. The cliché of Italian soldiers running away was not true in the beginning. The men sacrificed themselves even after it was amply clear the whole thing was a macabre and hopeless joke. Of course, nobody likes fighting against overwhelming odds. The men tried their best, armed as they were for a short colonial adventure against disarmed backward people, but certainly not to face the biggest, richest, most numerous and advanced armies in the world. The navy sacrificed its ships and one half of all officers in the desperate attempt to save its honour. What was missing in Italy was often not the courage or the will to fight but any kind of serious plan and organisation behind the fighting men.

Even if the experiment had not ended in catastrophe, historians would probably have wondered at the curious scarcity of concrete achievements during the twenty years of Fascist rule. What had Mussolini really done with his time? He promoted public works, to be sure, built harbours, railways, roads, schools, *autostrade*, monuments, aqueducts, hospitals, irrigation and drainage networks, public buildings, bridges, and so forth. Some of these things were good and useful: they were admired and envied by friends and enemies. And yet, in retrospect, the result of all this activity seems meagre. To get the exact measure of his achievements one must, first of all, subtract from the total all that would have been accomplished by any government in his place. It is difficult to believe that, without a dictator, dirt roads would not have been covered with asphalt, as they were all over Europe at the same time. Some marshes had been reclaimed, aqueducts and railways built, industries promoted in Italy by the liberal governments before the Fascist *coup d'état* and, even before them, by the Bourbons of Naples and by the Popes' inefficient governments. When all the projects which, hypothetically, would have been undertaken anyway are subtracted from the total, Mussolini's contributions, while still important, shrink perceptibly. They shrink a little more when one considers how many projects were plain mistakes, decided for political and spectacular reasons rather than with the hope of practical results; and how much money disappeared into the pockets of dishonest contractors. As a result the sum total of the Fascist achievements in this field seems out of proportion to the noise surrounding them, their fame, and their moral cost.

In reality, behind the scenery of modernisation and industrial investments, millions of Italians still lived a life of prehistoric squalor, and most of the fundamental problems of the country had been left practically untouched. One Mussolini really solved, peace with the Church. A few problems had somehow solved themselves, with the passage of time. Of some others only the visible symptoms had been attacked, never the deep-seated causes, too complicated and dull to interest a flashy, amateurish, hurried and journalistic leader. The problems which only a dictator could solve, the really hard ones, were left intact or became more serious and ingrained, problems like illiteracy, the Mafia, malaria, banditry, the social and political backwardness of the southern provinces, unequal distribution of income, primitive agriculture and an inadequate industrial structure.

His approach to many of the great contemporary difficulties was somewhat optimistic and facile. The very first instructions I received, in 1930, when I joined the *Corriere della Sera* bureau in London, were: "Do not mention the world economic crisis." They were his own words relayed to all journalists, his own way to settle one of the greatest difficulties of the times. I remember asking myself what would have happened if the Italian press had stopped mentioning the Atlantic Ocean: would Italians have drowned trying to go to New York on bicycles? When I went to Sardinia, a few years later, I was told to write about anything, anything at all, except two things, bandits and malaria. They were then the two most important phenomena of life in the island. They could easily be kept out of newspapers. But, I wondered, how could they be avoided in official documents and statistics. They were not, of

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course. They only had different names. The bandits were called *latitanti*, or fugitives from justice, and malaria was *febbre intermittente*, or intermittent fever. While urgent problems went unsolved, a number of imaginary ones were invented yearly and brilliantly eliminated: Italians were forbidden to shake hands (only the Fascist salute was allowed), foreign words were abolished from street signs and ordinary usage (the Pensione Milton of Rome became *Miltone*), and the *lei*, the formal address in the third person singular, was strictly prohibited by law and abolished in all grammars.

WHAT IS the explanation for the inaction and ineffectiveness of Fascism, and why did it fail? Mussolini was not stupid. He was shrewd, quick to learn, wary, astute. He could grasp a complex situation in a few minutes, face resolute opponents with success, usually take what intuitive decision any situation required. Perhaps he did not work hard enough. The suspicion came to me one day, many years ago, in Rome. I had given a lift to a soldier in my car. "Where to?" I asked him. "Palazzo Venezia," he said. I asked him why. He explained simply that he was from the same town as Mussolini's office cook, and that he had to deliver a package her people had given him. "Do you ever see Il Duce?" I asked idly. I, of course, saw him often, as a journalist, but only at formal ceremonies, surrounded by his retinue, and in uniform. "Oh yes," said the soldier calmly. "I see him all the time. He is always in the courtyard, talking to drivers and the doormen." I was stunned. I had probably stumbled on one of the darkest state secrets of the time. We now know that the light in his study was kept on until very late at night even when he was not there, which was often, to give people the illusion that he was sleeplessly attending to their welfare.

Even so, he worked hard enough, and he liked work. He knew everything that went on in Italy (he got his first news report in the morning from the Chief of Police and the general commanding the *carabinieri*), knew everybody (important people and people who wanted to be thought important went to see him several times a year), was kept *au courant* of the smallest secrets (telephones were tapped not only to defeat the enemies of the régime and to uncover the devious plans of foreign emissaries, but also to provide him with gossip), read everything that was easy to read, newspapers, magazines, books, saw every film, and met all the distinguished foreigners who went through Rome. If he was not the great statesman he wanted to appear, he certainly was a good politician, busy with the numberless chores of his calling, and a good journalist, keeping abreast of every development, gathering information for future use.

THE EXPLANATION OF his failure is perhaps that he was not a failure. He lost the war, power, his country, his mistress, his place in history, and his life, but he succeeded in what he had wanted to do since he took power. It was not to make his country safe and prosperous. It was not, obviously, to organise Italy for a modern war and for victory. He had dedicated his life just to putting up a good show, a stirring show. He had managed to do it extremely well. He should not be compared to Cromwell, Washington, Cavour, Bismarck, or Talleyrand, but to men like Ernesto Rossi and Tommaso Salvini, the eminent actors, and to P. T. Barnum. He was a flamboyant interpreter of heroic roles in the style of great 19th-century tragedians or operatic baritones. Paolo Monelli, the author of the best life of Mussolini, wrote:

> The Italians saw in him only the tenor for whom they raved as they had years before for Caruso and Tamagno. As one does with tenors, they enjoyed his good long notes and the melody without paying any attention to the words, but, if they had listened more carefully, they would not have been surprised by the catastrophe later. He had announced it.

He played a versatile and multifaced role, that of Mussolini, a heroic mixture of the Renaissance *condottiere*, cold Machiavellian thinker, Lenin-like leader of a revolutionary minority, steely-minded dictator, humanitarian despot, Casanova lover, and Nietzschean superman. He added later to his repertoire the Napoleonic genius, with well-known results, and, just before he died, the socialist renovator of society. He was none of these things. In the end, like an old actor, he no longer remembered what he really was, felt, believed, and wanted. Ugo Ojetti, an erudite art critic, writer, and man of taste, who liked him, used to say in the thirties: "I cannot help thinking, when I see him, how much his face must ache at night when he retires." That he was conscious of playing roles all the time could be discerned by any attentive observer: he walked, strutted, or strode like a tragedian wearing an ancient

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costume; he pivoted on one spurred boot heel as if he were always trailing a long purple cloak behind him. He never tired but never looked at ease.

His success seemed incredible. He was more popular in Italy than anybody had ever been and probably will ever be. His pictures were cut out of newspapers and magazines and pasted on the walls of poor peasant cottages, at the side of the Madonna and Saint Joseph. Schoolgirls fell in love with him as with a film star. His more memorable words were written large on village houses for all to read. One of his collaborators exclaimed, after listening to him announce from the balcony that Ethiopia had been conquered and that Rome had again become the Capital of an Empire, in May, 1935: "He is like a god...." "Like a god? No, No," said another. "He *is* a god."

I remember him, one day, during military manœuvres in the Langhe, in 1932, walking through a vast bare plain of yellow stubble surrounded by distant green hills, trees, and the steeples of village churches. Peasants came running from all sides, red-faced, panting, to see him, touch him, shout to him. One of his secretaries followed him with a leather envelope, the exact size of thousand-lire bills, to hand banknotes to the more miserable with the gesture of a gambler dealing out cards. Soon enough Mussolini was leading a parade of thousands of frenzied and gesticulating followers. He showed no expression on his face except the usual wooden determination. Mothers lifted babies high for him to see and possibly to touch, as they had done to kings in the Middle Ages. At one point a few nuns came running, their long black veils flying in the wind, carrying baskets of freshly-picked peaches to offer him. He accepted their homage without thanking them, without turning his head or smiling, and handed the fruit to his retinue. Nobody who saw it will ever forget the sight of city squares filled with crowds listening to him; the heads were as close together as tesserae in a mosaic, all eyes turned to one focal point, the balcony or stand from which he was speaking. It was an ominous and frightening sight.

We laugh now when we see him in old newsreels. Possibly his showmanship was like some wines which do not last or travel well, but which are excellent when consumed the year they are made in their native surroundings. His technique was flamboyant, juvenile, ridiculous, but highly effective: it pleased his public, the plebian and illiterate masses from which he had sprung, the patriarchal Italians of the villages and the countryside who longed for the ancient peace they had lost with the industrial revolution and the first world war; the "bigoted and reactionary" *petite bourgeoisie*, as Mario Missiroli called it, who wanted to attend to their little affairs and let other people worry about vast problems; the half-baked intellectuals and the frustrated nationalists who felt humiliated, born and living in a third-rate country with a first-rate glorious name, a country easily beaten by less glorious but more efficient rivals. His technique was obviously not meant for men of taste and culture. In Italy these were, anyway, a minority which did not count; many, like Benedetto Croce, their leader, firmly resisted the régime; many faced death in exile or life imprisonment; many collaborated with it, either intimidated and frightened or ready to exploit what opportunities the régime offered.

The job had been an easy one in the beginning. There was practically no gap between the spectacle and reality. Many things were being done. Some of the easier problems were effectively dealt with. The country was improving. Living conditions were getting better. He had inherited a good bureaucracy from the previous governments. He was then still ready to listen to good advice. Later the job became more and more difficult: the international situation grew more menacing and complicated. The gap between the flamboyant representations, the ceremonies, the fiery speeches, and the plain and ugly facts widened dangerously. After twenty years of dictatorship, people did not know he was not really solving any problem. People were drugged by propaganda and stirring shows. Most of them had lost or forgotten the capacity to judge things independently. Those who were alarmed at the way things were going consoled themselves by thinking that he was always there, in the Palazzo Venezia, the "sleepless one," working hard, seeing to it that nothing irrevocably bad would happen. His reassuring face looked at everybody from each wall, from every film screen. Many secretly trusted him to avoid a real show-down, a catastrophe. Had he not made Italy a first-rate power, well-armed, well-commanded, feared by her enemies? Was he not the greatest man ever born in Italy? Was he not, like all of them, "no fool"?

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TRYING to find out what really happened, one gets lost in a complex psychological labyrinth, bewildered by an Italian play of mirrors reflecting each other's distorted images. There is no doubt, to begin with, that Mussolini deceived the people. He used deceit as a tool to govern with. The thing is not deplorable in principle. All great statesmen have had recourse to occasional distortions, misinterpretations, and outright lies. Mussolini merely lied more than all other past statesmen, a little more than some of his contemporary competitors, less than Hitler anyway; he enjoyed a monopoly and was able to multiply his lies by making good use of the newest communication techniques. His slanted views and fabrications filled newspapers, posters, the radio, the film screens, many books, magazines, and even the conversations between people who did not know each other very well. After such unprecedented mass attacks, it is not surprising that the majority of his captive audience believed most of what he wanted them to believe.

He was not entirely a ruthless and cold-blooded "souls-engineer," a push-button politician who heartlessly manipulated people's emotions, beliefs, hopes, in his own interest, to further his schemes. He could be described as such only when he tried to convince his people of things he knew were utterly false; this happened often enough, but not always. He, too, was an Italian. He, too, loved a good show, enjoyed a good military parade, was comforted by a naval review, or strengthened by a vast ocean-like meeting in a city square. He, too, believed his own slogans. He, too, was amazed by the fake statistics, thrilled by empty boasts, stirred to tears by his own oratory. He, too, confused appearances for reality, the veneer for the solid wood. Truth, for him also, was what it looked like and what most people liked to believe.

HIS SHOW WAS necessarily always new and startling. Only by keeping his public interested, thrilled, puzzled, frightened, and entertained, could he make them forget the sacrifice of their liberty and their miserable poverty, unite a solid majority of them behind him, dishearten and divide the opposition, assure internal order and international prestige. Obviously, the choice of a sober policy imposing real sacrifices and a stern discipline, the admission that difficulties could not be annulled by the use of words, sleight-of-hand tricks and optimistic communiqués, but needed a lot of grim studying, careful planning, and hard work, would have probably cost him his job. He was not the man to conceive such a dreary programme, anyway, or to carry it through. Boredom would have destroyed him. Therefore one may say that not all his performing was his own, dictated by his caprice. Much of it was demanded by the people themselves, most of the time he had to give them also the lies they expected, the myths they wanted badly to believe in, in a critical and dramatic phase of their history, just as the character he impersonated was not wholly of his own choosing, but also one many Italians had been expecting, the impersonation of their secret longings, and one which placated their obscure anxieties. Signs proclaimed all over Italy: "Duce, you are all of us!" It was, in a way, true.

He could not help being corrupted by his own spectacle and people who surrounded him. Roman emperors all began to deteriorate the day they were raised to the imperial dignity. Many great leaders in the past, drunk with their own great importance and vast intelligence, thinking themselves infallible, surrounded by sycophants, eventually stumbled and committed a fatal mistake. At one point, they all took too big a risk. Napoleon attacked Russia and Hitler tried to fight two wars on two fronts. But Napoleon and Hitler commanded the most efficient and powerful military machines of their times, which had hitherto defeated all their enemies. They both had a reasonable chance; they both came close to winning, against heavy odds.

Mussolini never had a chance. It is true, he thought the war was almost over when he entered it, in June, 1940; he counted on the aid of his mighty ally in an emergency; he trusted his intuition and his luck. But any reasonably prudent dictator should also have been prepared for unforeseen circumstances. He was not. He should have known that Germans sometimes lost wars and that they had an even chance of losing this one if it lasted long enough. He had suspected it, for a while, in the beginning when Italy was still neutral, and knew it at the end. He explained to friends and collaborators. "Germans, of course, are militarists, not soldiers. They are going to lose. If they had as much political as strategic genius, they would have been the masters of the world centuries ago." What he never knew was what every military attaché in every foreign embassy in

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Rome knew, that Italy was ridiculously and tragically unprepared. What blinded him?

HE NEVER even suspected that practically nothing was behind his show. He never knew how really weak, disarmed, and demoralised the country was. He honestly thought he could play a role with his ineffective army, his servile generals, his Biedermeier guns, his toy planes, his tin tanks, and his ramshackle industries. This is an inexplicable state of affairs. He was no fool. He was not mad. While a little worn out and prematurely aged by his intense life, his love affairs (Claretta Petacci had come into his life in 1936, when he was 53 and she 24), and his bad health (he suffered from nervous stomach cramps, which gave him great pain in moments of crisis), he was on the whole still well-aware of what was going on. He was badly informed, that is all. But he wanted to be badly informed. He knew nothing about Italy's military preparations. He had kept himself in the dark. He had been deceived by himself. But he had been aided by his ministers, his generals, the shows, the parades, the mass meetings, and the people.

He had tried, from time to time, in the beginning, to pierce the curtain of official obsequiousness and official half-truths and deceptions. As long as his brother Arnaldo was alive (he died in 1931) and as long as he saw some outspoken old friends and collaborators, he was not yet dangerously detached from reality. But gradually the heady atmosphere of high position got the better of him. Somehow he was not capable of protecting himself from its deleterious effects. The master of make-believe could not always detect make-believe when practised by others on him. This, of course, is the heart of the matter. His resistance to deception, which was never very strong, gradually dwindled and eventually disappeared altogether. When people warned him against adulation, he shrugged his shoulders.

In one of the first months of his government, in 1923, an old ambassador returned from Geneva, where he had represented Italy at a meeting on the control of poison gases. As the venerable gentleman entered the younger man's room, he did not look up from his desk and went on writing. Finally, after long minutes, he lifted his eyes from the paper and, jutting his chin forward, asked disdainfully: "What are the most dangerous gases, ambassador?" The ambassador gravely answered: "Incense is the most lethal of all, your excellency." He was soon put on the retired list.

As the years went by, Mussolini became completely addicted to the artificial paradise he had created for others. He needed bigger and bigger doses of flattery and deception each year. In the end the most sickening and improbable lies, as long as they adulated his idea of himself and confirmed his prejudices, seemed to him the plain and unadorned expression of objective truth.

ALL GREAT PERSONAGES, of course, are surrounded by fawning courtiers. Flatterers are especially common in Italy, where the people have always employed such arts offensively, to gain advantages, destroy rivals, and conquer power and wealth; and defensively, as the squid uses ink, to blind and confound powerful men, dictators, and tyrants. But most great personages are aware of the danger surrounding them. All men in authority, in Italy, any kind of authority, even village mayors, know that the smiles, the praises, the gifts, the applause are not for them but for their rank. Most of them manage to protect themselves from disaster. Mussolini never learned. He was too convinced of his own infallibility. He liked only the men who did not warn him of the dangers facing him and never tried to tell him the truth. As a result the only people approaching him were the best flatterers of the kingdom. They were not all dishonest. Some were just fools who believed what they said. Some desperately hoped that what they said was true, that he really was the greatest man alive and that all would turn out for the best in the end. They flattered him also to reassure themselves. Others were just unscrupulous crooks.

In the end he lived within a private imaginary world of his own. The cities he visited had been carefully prepared a long time before his arrival: he was shown only the things and the people that would please and comfort him. Everything else was efficiently hidden. He did not know the enthusiastic crowds cheering him were reinforced by regiments of black-shirted policemen and by thousands of extras brought from the provinces the day before. He did not know that some of the new buildings, public works, or villages he opened were abandoned and began decaying the following day, that some of the aqueducts never carried water, and that all the numberless divisions he was passing in re-

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view were more or less always the same few, transported here and there.

THE TECHNIQUE was so smooth that it even deceived Hitler. Preparations for his visit in 1938 went on for six months. All Italy was to show the German dictator a new face. Nothing was to be left that was "19th century, homely, familiar." The country was transformed. Streets where the parades were to pass were re-designed and reconstructed like film sets, houses were painted and decorated along the railway line from the Brenner to Rome. The soldiers taking part in the reviews had been hand-picked. Most of them were to be blue-eyed and tall, to show the visitors that Italians, too, were Aryans. (Only the King could not be changed, to Mussolini's annoyance. He was very small and not impressive. He was, strangely enough, the only nordic one of them all, with so much Austrian and German blood in him, showing through his light blue eyes.) The parading soldiers were armed with all the weapons existing in the country. They were all dressed in brand-new uniforms.

It is well known that Hitler's favourable opinion of his partner, of Italian military preparations, and the people's devotion to the régime and to the Axis, made him commit several miscalculations, one of which probably cost him the war. He believed, in the end, that he lost the Russian campaign because he had started four weeks too late; he was four weeks late because he wasted time to rescue the Italians bogged down in Albania, in their ill-prepared attack on Greece. If this were true, Mussolini could be considered the greatest negative military genius the world has ever seen, who defeated two great nations single-handed, his own and Germany.

Il Duce enjoyed the show more than Hitler did. He always chuckled when he read the writings on house-walls, as if the words were really the expression of the people's will. He also read with relish the reports of ambassadors from abroad, strictly announcing the things he wanted to believe. He read his own newspapers with great pleasure. It was easy to fool him. Once, during the war, he looked at some figures in a report, pretending to be the total number of new guns his army possessed, and protested. There were not that many new guns in Italy. He knew. His Under-Secretary for War, an astute general, quickly replied: "No, Duce, there has been a mistake. These are the guns our industries are planning to produce in the near future." He was reassured.

MUSSOLINI fell from power on July 25th, 1943. The Allied armies had invaded Sicily only a few days before. All overseas possessions were lost. The Italian army had been destroyed in Russia, in the Balkans, and in Africa. Italy was battered and paralysed by mass air-bombardments. The Germans themselves were only carrying on defensive retreats, economically, sparing whatever resources and men they had left. All the big Fascist chiefs took part in a fateful meeting of the Grand Council, presided over by Il Duce, who looked tired, haggard, and senile. He made an objective, or almost objective, exposition of the situation, showing that he had kept a good journalist's superficial grasp of things to the end, in spite of all, but talked as if he were talking of other countries, other wars, other leaders, other times. His henchmen demanded that the command of all armed forces be turned over to the King. Mussolini pleaded with them, cajoled them, threatened them, pointing to some files, presumably filled with compromising secrets, which he had on the table beside him, pleaded with them to respect his old age. ("I shall be sixty in a few days," he said.) Finally he acquiesced. He accepted his demotion.

The following day Victor Emmanuel received him in his private villa and ordered his arrest. There was no Fascist revolt when the news spread. No faithful followers rose in arms. Nobody kept the Fascist oath: "I swear to defend the revolution with my blood." Nothing happened. The show was over, that was all. The people rejoiced tumultuously. Mussolini was transported here and there, to some islands at first, then to a resort hotel in the mountains of Abruzzi he had built for skiers, in search of a place the Germans could not reach. The Germans found him anyway, in spite of the fact that there was no road to the hotel and only a cable railway connected it with the lowlands. They used gliders. Mussolini arrived at Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia, thanked his liberator, donned his old uniform, and was named president of a puppet régime, the Fascist Republic of North Italy.

HIS HEADQUARTERS were on Lake Garda, comfortably on the direct road to the Brenner Pass, in case of sudden retreat. His last few months of life were dismal. He knew everything was

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lost, he was a failure, his régime had plunged Italy into the wrong war, at the wrong time, with practically no weapons; and those few moral and material resources which existed, including the heroic courage of thousands of men, were squandered in insensate expeditions dictated by an amateur strategist's desire to show his ally that he, too, was a master-mind. Sometimes he tried to find alibis: the fault was the Italians', he said, their soft character, their dislike of vigorous action; they were not the descendants of the ancient Romans but of foreign slaves, mongrels, serfs. He dreamed of a return to power, when he would take revenge on all his enemies, made possible by the secret weapons which the Germans had prepared. He paid practically no attention to current affairs, read many books, wrote an enormous quantity of insignificant articles, essays, apologias, memoirs, including some for children's publications. He was interested in but one thing, the position he would have in history. Jesus Christ, Napoleon, Cæsar? he asked his visitors guardedly. He never mentioned Cola di Rienzo. He never mentioned Barnum, either. He visited Claretta Petacci in a little village nearby almost every day. He was sick, weak, and dispirited. He knew the end had come.

THE END indeed came on April 25th, 1945. The Germans had signed a secret armistice with the Allies, behind his back, and were giving themselves up to the Allies as prisoners of war. He tried to negotiate his own armistice through the Archbishop of Milan but soon realised he had no power and no other open possibility than that of giving himself up. He had counted on the loyalty of the people of Milan who had cheered him in the streets with practically the old enthusiasm only a few months before in January, and had wildly applauded a speech he had made in a theatre. But the people were now all against him. It was dangerous to stay in the city. He decided to escape with a handful of faithful followers to Valtellina or to Switzerland. To the end, as usual, he vacillated and could not make up his mind. How should his adventure finish?

Like Cola, he was undecided: heroic death or bourgeois escape? Valtellina is a narrow Italian valley which penetrates into Swiss territory like a wedge; it can be defended on a small front by few men, as it is protected to the left and right. He could easily make a last stand there, with a few companions, or, if he changed his mind, reach foreign soil with only a few hours' march through the mountains. In the end, like Cola, he decided to trust his art as an actor: to disguise himself and flee. He made up his mind to go directly to Switzerland, without wasting time in more futile and bloody heroics, carrying all his money and all his most useful documents, those he would employ to frighten Allied statesmen and to defend himself if he were tried as a war criminal. He was found and arrested by partisans on the road going north along the shore of Lake Como, hiding in a German truck, dressed in the heavy coat of a German petty-officer and a German helmet. Claretta Petacci was arrested with him.

They were both shot against the ornate gate of a pompous villa, the next morning. The woman had tried to shield his body and was mown down with him. The money and documents disappeared for ever. The bodies were taken to Milan and hung, like Cola's, feet high, from a petrol station roof, alongside those of all the other Fascist chiefs caught and killed on the same road, on their way to Switzerland.

Thirteen years before, he had told Emil Ludwig: "Everybody dies the death that corresponds to his character." He had deluded the people, that was his crime. But his fatal error was that he had not known that the people were also deluding him. They led him to the catastrophe which was the most costly but the only way they knew to get rid of him.

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W. H. Auden

Iceland Revisited

(for Basil and Susan Boothby)

Unwashed, unshat,
He was whisked from the plane
To a lunch in his honour.

*

He hears a loud-speaker
Call him well known,
But knows himself no better.

*

The desolate fjord
Denied the possibility
Of many gods.

*

Twenty-eight years ago
Three slept well here.
Now one is married, one dead,

Where the harmonium stood
A radio:—
Have the Fittest survived?

*

Unable to speak Icelandic,
He helped instead
To do the dishes.

*

The bondi's sheep-dog
And the visitor from New York
Conversed freely.

*

Snow had camouflaged
The pool of liquid manure:
The town-mouse fell in.

*

A blizzard. A bare room.
Thoughts of the past.
He forgot to wind his watch.

*

The gale howled over lava. Suddenly,
In the storm's eye,
A dark speck,

Perseus in an air-taxi,
Come to snatch
Shivering Andromeda

Out of the wilderness
And bring her back
To hot baths, cocktails, habits.

*

Once more
A child's dream verified
The magical light beyond Hekla.

*

Fortunate island,
Where all men are equal
But not vulgar—not yet.

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The Psycholinguists

On the New Scientists of Language — By GEORGE A. MILLER

PSYCHOLOGISTS have long recognised that human minds feed on linguistic symbols. Linguists have always admitted that some kind of psycho-social motor must move the machinery of grammar and lexicon. Sooner or later they were certain to examine their intersection self-consciously. Perhaps it was also inevitable that the result would be called "psycholinguistics."

In fact, although the enterprise itself has slowly been gathering strength at least since the invention of the telephone, the name, in its unhyphenated form, is only about ten years old. Few seem pleased with the term, but the field has grown so rapidly and stirred so much interest in recent years that some way of referring to it is urgently needed. *Psycholinguistics* is as descriptive a term as any, and shorter than most.

Among psychologists it was principally the behaviourists who wished to take a closer look at language. Behaviourists generally try to replace anything subjective by its most tangible, physical manifestation, so they have had a long tradition of confusing thought with speech—or with "verbal behaviour," as many prefer to call it. Among linguists it was principally those with an anthropological sideline who were most willing to collaborate, perhaps because as anthropologists they were sensitive to all those social and psychological processes that support our linguistic practices. By working together they managed to call attention to an important field of scientific research and to integrate it, or at least to acquaint its various parts with one another, under this new rubric.[1]

Interest in psycholinguistics, however, is not confined to psychologists and linguists. Many people have been stirred by splendid visions of its practical possibilities. One thinks of medical applications to the diagnosis and treatment of a heterogeneous variety of language disorders ranging from simple stammering to the overwhelming complexities of aphasia.[2] One thinks too of pedagogical applications, of potential improvements in our methods for teaching reading and writing, or for teaching second languages. If psycholinguistic principles were made sufficiently explicit, they could be imparted to those technological miracles of the twentieth century, the computing machines, which would bring into view a whole spectrum of cybernetic possibilities.[3] We could exploit our electrical channels for voice communications more efficiently. We might improve and automate our dictionaries, using them for mechanical translation from one language to another. Perhaps computers could print what we say, or even say what we print, thus making speech visible for the deaf and printing audible for the blind. We might, in short, learn to adapt computers to dozens of our human purposes if only they could interpret our languages. Little wonder that assorted physicians, educators, philosophers, logicians, and engineers have been intrigued by this new adventure.

Of course, the realisation of practical benefits must await the success of the scientific effort; there is some danger that enthusiasm may colour our estimate of what can be accomplished. Not a few sceptics remain unconvinced; some can even be found who argue that success is impossible in principle. "Science," they say, "can go only so far...."

[1] A representative sample of research papers in this field can be found in *Psycholinguistics, a Book of Readings*, edited by S. Saporta (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1962). R. Brown provides a readable survey from a psychologist's point of view in *Words and Things* (Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1957).

[2] The CIBA Foundation Symposium, *Disorders of Language* (J. & A. Churchill, London, 1964) provides an excellent sample of the current status of medical psycholinguistics.

[3] *Natural Language and the Computer*, edited by P. L. Garvin (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1963).

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THE INTEGRATION of psycholinguistic studies has occurred so recently that there is still some confusion concerning its scope and purpose; efforts to clarify it necessarily have something of the character of personal opinion.[4] In my own version, the central task of this new science is to describe the psychological processes that go on when people use sentences. The real crux of the psycholinguistic problem does not appear until one tries to deal with sentences, for only then does the importance of productivity become completely obvious. It is true that productivity can also appear with individual words, but there it is not overwhelming. With sentences, productivity is literally unlimited.

Before considering this somewhat technical problem, however, it might be well to illustrate the variety of processes that psycholinguists hope to explain. This can best be done if we ask what a listener can do about a spoken utterance, and consider his alternatives in order from the superficial to the inscrutable.

The simplest thing one can do in the presence of a spoken utterance is to listen. Even if the language is incomprehensible, one can still *hear* an utterance as an auditory stimulus and respond to it in terms of some discriminative set: how loud, how fast, how long, from which direction, etc.

Given that an utterance is heard, the next level involves *matching* it as a phonemic pattern in terms of phonological skills acquired as a user of the language. The ability to match an input can be tested in psychological experiments by asking listeners to echo what they hear; a wide variety of experimental situations —experiments on the perception of speech and on the note memorisation of verbal materials— can be summarised as tests of a person's ability to repeat the speech he hears under various conditions of audibility or delay.

If a listener can hear and match an utterance, the next question to ask is whether he will *accept* it as a sentence in terms of his knowledge of grammar. At this level we encounter processes difficult to study experimentally, and one is forced to rely most heavily on linguistic analyses of the structure of sentences. Some experiments are possible, however, for we can measure how much a listener's ability to accept the utterance as a sentence facilitates his ability to hear and match it; grammatical sentences are much easier to hear, utter or remember than are ungrammatical strings of words, and even nonsense (*pirot, karol, elat,* etc.) is easier to deal with if it looks grammatical (*pirots karolise elatically,* etc.).[5] Needless to say, the grammatical knowledge we wish to study does not concern those explicit rules drilled into us by teachers of traditional grammar, but rather the implicit generative knowledge that we all must acquire in order to use a language appropriately.

Beyond grammatical acceptance comes semantic interpretation: we can ask how listeners *interpret* an utterance as meaningful in terms of their semantic system. Interpretation is not merely a matter of assigning meanings to individual words; we must also consider how these component meanings combine in grammatical sentences. Compare the sentences: *Healthy young babies sleep soundly* and *Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.* Although they are syntactically similar, the second is far harder to perceive and remember correctly—because it cannot be interpreted by the usual semantic rules for combining the senses of adjacent English words.[6] The interpretation of each word is affected by the company it keeps; a central problem is to systematise the interactions of words and phrases with their linguistic contexts. The lexicographer makes his major contribution at this point, but psychological studies of our ability to paraphrase an utterance also have their place.

At the next level it seems essential to make some distinction between interpreting an utterance and understanding it, for understanding frequently goes well beyond the linguistic context provided by the utterance itself. A husband greeted at the door by "I bought some electric light bulbs to-day" must do more than interpret its literal reference; he must understand that he should go to the kitchen and replace that burned-out lamp. Such contextual information lies well outside any grammar or lexicon. The listener can *understand* the function of an utterance in terms of contextual knowledge of the most diverse sort.

Finally, at a level now almost invisible through the clouds, a listener may *believe* that an utterance is valid in terms of its relevance to his own conduct. The child who says "I saw five lions in the garden" may be heard, matched,

[4] My own opinions have been strongly influenced by Noam Chomsky. A rather technical exposition of this work can be found in Chapters 11–13 of the second volume of the *Handbook of Mathematical Psychology*, edited by R. D. Luce, R. R. Bush, and E. Galanter (Wiley, New York, 1963), from which many of the ideas discussed here have been drawn.

[5] W. Epstein, "The Influence of Syntactical Structure on Learning," *American Journal of Psychology* (1961), vol. 74, pp. 80–85.

[6] G. A. Miller and S. Isard, "Some Perceptual Consequences of Linguistic Rules," *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behaviour* (1963), vol. 2, pp. 217–228. J. J. Katz and J. A. Fodor have recently contributed a thoughtful discussion of "The Structure of Semantic Theory," *Language* (1963), vol. 39, pp. 170–210.

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accepted, interpreted, and understood, but in few parts of the world will he be believed.

The boundaries between successive levels are not sharp and distinct. One shades off gradually into the next. Still the hierarchy is real enough and important to keep in mind. Simpler types of psycholinguistic processes can be studied rather intensively; already we know much about hearing and matching. Accepting and interpreting are just now coming into scientific focus. Understanding is still over the horizon, and pragmatic questions involving belief systems are presently so vague as to be hardly worth asking. But the whole range of processes must be included in any adequate definition of psycholinguistics.

I PHRASED the description of these various psycholinguistic processes in terms of a listener; the question inevitably arises as to whether a different hierarchy is required to describe the speaker. One problem a psycholinguist faces is to decide whether speaking and listening are two separate abilities, co-ordinate but distinct, or whether they are merely different manifestations of a single linguistic faculty.

The mouth and ear are different organs; at the simplest levels we must distinguish hearing and matching from vocalising and speaking. At more complex levels it is less easy to decide whether the two abilities are distinct. At some point they must converge, if only to explain why it is so difficult to speak and listen simultaneously. The question is where.

It is easy to demonstrate how important to a speaker is the sound of his own voice. If his speech is delayed a fifth of a second, amplified, and fed back into his own ears, the voice-ear asynchrony can be devastating to the motor skills of articulate speech. It is more difficult, however, to demonstrate that the same linguistic competence required for speaking is also involved in processing the speech of others.

Recently Morris Halle and Kenneth Stevens of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology revived a suggestion made by Wilhelm von Humboldt over a century ago.[7] Suppose we accept the notion that a listener recognises what he hears by comparing it with some internal representation. To the extent that a match can be obtained, the input is accepted and interpreted. One trouble with this hypothesis, however, is that a listener must be ready to recognise any one of an enormous number of different sentences. It is inconceivable that a separate internal representation for each of them could be stored in his memory in advance. Halle and Stevens suggest that these internal representations must be generated as they are needed by following the same generative rules that are normally used in producing speech. In this way the rules of the language are incorporated into the theory only once, in a generative form; they need not be learned once by the ear and again by the tongue. This is a theory of a language-user, not of a speaker or a listener alone.

The listener begins with a guess about the input. On that basis he generates an internal matching signal. The first attempt will probably be in error; if so, the mismatch is reported and used as a basis for a next guess, which should be closer. This cycle repeats (unconsciously, almost certainly) until a satisfactory (not necessarily a correct) match is obtained, at which point the next segment of speech is scanned and matched, etc. The output is not a transformed version of the input; it is the programme that was followed to generate the matching representation.

The perceptual categories available to such a system are defined by the generative rules at its disposal. It is also reasonably obvious that its efficiency is critically dependent on the quality of the initial guess. If this guess is close, an iterative process can converge rapidly; if not, the listener will be unable to keep pace with the rapid flow of conversational speech.

A listener's first guess probably derives in part from syntactic markers in the form of intonation, inflection, suffixes, etc., and in part from his general knowledge of the semantic and situational context. Syntactic cues indicate how the input is to be grouped and which words function together; semantic and contextual contributions are more difficult to characterise, but must somehow enable him to limit the range of possible words that he can expect to hear.

HOW HE IS ABLE TO DO THIS is an utter mystery, but the fact that he can do it is easily demonstrated.

The English psychologist David Bruce recorded a set of ordinary sentences and played them in the presence of noise so intense that the voice was just audible, but not intelligible.[8] He told his listeners that these were sentences on some general topic—sports, say—and asked them to repeat what they heard. He then told them they would hear more sentences on a different topic, which they were also to repeat. This was done several times. Each time the listeners

[7] M. Halle and K. N. Stevens, "Speech Recognition: A Model and a Program for Research," *IRE Transactions on Information Theory* (1962), vol. IT-8, pp. 155–159.

[8] "Effects of Context upon the Intelligibility of Heard Speech," in *Information Theory*, edited by Colin Cherry (Butterworths, London, 1956, pp. 245–252).

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repeated sentences appropriate to the topic announced in advance. When at the end of the experiment Bruce told them they had heard the same recording every time—all he had changed was the topic they were given—most listeners were unable to believe it.

With an advance hypothesis about what the message will be we can tune our perceptual system to favour certain interpretations and reject others. This fact is no proof of a generative process in speech perception, but it does emphasise the important role of context. For most theories of speech perception the facilitation provided by context is merely a fortunate though rather complicated fact. For a generative theory it is essential.

Note that generative theories do not assume that a listener must be able to articulate the sounds he recognises, but merely that he be able to generate some internal representation to match the input. In this respect a generative theory differs from a motor theory (such as that of Sir Richard Paget) which assumes that we can identify only those utterances we are capable of producing ourselves. There is some rather compelling evidence against a motor theory. The American psychologist Eric Lenneberg has described the case of an eight-year-old boy with congenital anarthria; despite his complete inability to speak, the boy acquired an excellent ability to understand language.[9] Moreover, it is a common observation that utterances can be understood by young children before they are able to produce them. A motor theory of speech-perception draws too close a parallel between our two capacities as users of language. Even so, the two are more closely integrated than most people realise.

I HAVE ALREADY offered the opinion that productivity sets the central problem for the psycholinguist and have even referred to it indirectly by arguing that we can produce too many different sentences to store them all in memory. The issue can be postponed no longer.

To make the problem plain, consider an example on the level of individual words. For several days I carried in my pocket a small white card on which was typed UNDERSTANDER. On suitable occasions I would hand it to someone. "How do you pronounce this?" I asked.

He pronounced it.

"Is it an English word?"

He hesitated. "I haven't seen it used very much. I'm not sure."

"Do you know what it means?"

"I suppose it means 'one who understands.'"

I thanked him and changed the subject.

Of course, understander *is* an English word, but to find it you must look in a large dictionary where you will probably read that it is "now rare." Rare enough, I think, for none of my respondents to have seen it before. Nevertheless, they all answered in the same way. Nobody seemed surprised. Nobody wondered how he could understand and pronounce a word without knowing whether it was a word. Everybody put the main stress on the third syllable and constructed a meaning from the verb "to understand" and the agentive suffix "*er*." Familiar morphological rules of English were applied as a matter of course, even though the combination was completely novel.

Probably no one but a psycholinguist captured by the ingenuous behaviouristic theory that words are vocal responses conditioned to occur in the presence of appropriate stimuli would find anything exceptional in this. Since none of my friends had seen the word before, and so could not have been "conditioned" to give the responses they did, how would this theory account for their "verbal behaviour"? Advocates of a conditioning theory of meaning—and there are several distinguished scientists among them—would probably explain linguistic productivity in terms of "conditioned generalisations."[10] They could argue that my respondents had been conditioned to the word understand and to the suffix—*er*; responses to their union could conceivably be counted as instances of stimulus generalisation. In this way, novel responses could occur without special training.

Although a surprising amount of psychological ingenuity has been invested in this kind of argument, it is difficult to estimate its value. No one has carried the theory through for all the related combinations that must be explained simultaneously. One can speculate, however, that there would have to be many different kinds of generalisation, each with a carefully defined range of applicability. For example, it would be necessary to explain why "understander" is acceptable, whereas "erunderstand" is not. Worked out in detail, such a theory would become a sort of Pavlovian paraphrase of a linguistic description. Of course, if one believes there is some essential difference between behaviour governed by conditioned habits and behaviour governed by rules, the paraphrase could never be more than a vast intellectual pun.

[9] "Understanding Language without Ability to Speak: A Case Report," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (1962), vol. 65, pp. 419–425.

[10] A dog conditioned to salivate at the sound of a tone will also salivate, though less copiously, at the sound of similar tones, the magnitude declining as the new tones become less similar to the original. This phenomenon is called "stimulus generalisation."

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ORIGINAL COMBINATIONS of elements are the life blood of language. It is our ability to produce and comprehend such novelties that makes language so ubiquitously useful. As psychologists have become more seriously interested in the cognitive processes that language entails, they have been forced to recognise that the fundamental puzzle is not our ability to associate vocal noises with perceptual objects, but rather our combinatorial productivity—our ability to understand an unlimited diversity of utterances never heard before and to produce an equal variety of utterances similarly intelligible to other members of our speech community. Faced with this problem, concepts borrowed from conditioning theory seem not so much invalid as totally inadequate.

Some idea of the relative magnitudes of what we might call the productive as opposed to the reproductive components of any psycholinguistic theory is provided by statistical studies of language. A few numbers can reinforce the point. If you interrupt a speaker at some randomly chosen instant, there will be, on the average, about ten words that form grammatical and meaningful continuations. Often only one word is admissible and sometimes there are thousands, but on the average it works out to about ten. (If you think this estimate too low, I will not object; larger estimates strengthen the argument.) A simple English sentence can easily run to a length of twenty words, so elementary arithmetic tells us that there must be at least 10^{20} such sentences that a person who knows English must know how to deal with. Compare this productive potential with the 10^4 or 10^5 individual words we know—the reproductive component of our theory—and the discrepancy is dramatically illustrated. Putting it differently, it would take 100,000,000,000 centuries (one thousand times the estimated age of the earth) to utter all the admissible twenty-word sentences of English. Thus, the probability that you might have heard any particular twenty-word sentence before is negligible. Unless it is a cliché, every sentence must come to you as a novel combination of morphemes. Yet you can interpret it at once if you know the English language.

With these facts in mind it is impossible to argue that we learn to understand sentences from teachers who have pronounced each one and explained what it meant. What we have learned are not particular strings of words, but *rules* for generating admissible strings of words.

CONSIDER what it means to follow a rule; this consideration shifts the discussion of psycholinguistics into very difficult territory. The nature of rules has been a central concern of modern philosophy and perhaps no analysis has has been more influential than Ludwig Wittgenstein's. Wittgenstein remarked that the most characteristic thing we can say about "rule-governed behaviour" is that the person who knows the rules knows whether he is proceeding correctly or incorrectly. Although he may not be able to formulate the rules explicitly, he knows what it is to make a mistake. If this remark is accepted, we must ask ourselves whether an animal that has been conditioned is privy to any such knowledge about the correctness of what he is doing. Perhaps such a degree of insight could be achieved by the great apes, but surely not by all the various species that can acquire conditioned reflexes. On this basis alone it would seem necessary to preserve a distinction between conditioning and learning rules.

As psychologists have learned to appreciate the complexities of language, the prospect of reducing it to the laws of behaviour so carefully studied in lower animals has grown increasingly remote. We have been forced more and more into a position that non-psychologists probably take for granted, namely, that language is rule-governed behaviour characterised by enormous flexibility and freedom of choice.

Obvious as this conclusion may seem, it has important implications for any scientific theory of language. If rules involve the concepts of right and wrong, they introduce a normative aspect that has always been avoided in the natural sciences. One hears repeatedly that the scientist's ability to suppress normative judgments about his subject-matter enables him to see the world objectively, as it really is. To admit that language follows rules seems to put it outside the range of phenomena accessible to scientific investigation.

At this point a psycholinguist who wishes to preserve his standing as a natural scientist faces an old but always difficult decision. Should he withdraw and leave the study of language to others? Or should he give up all pretence of being a "natural scientist," searching for causal explanations, and embrace a more phenomenological approach? Or should he push blindly ahead with his empirical methods, hoping to find a causal basis for normative practices, but running the risk that all his efforts will be wasted because rule-governed behaviour in principle lies beyond the scope of natural science?

To withdraw means to abandon hope of understanding scientifically all those human mental processes that involve language in any important degree. To persevere means to face the enormously difficult, if not actually impossible task of finding a place for normative rules in a descriptive science.

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Difficult, yes. Still one wonders whether these alternatives are really as mutually exclusive as they seem.

THE FIRST THING we notice when we survey the languages of the world is how few we can understand and how diverse they all seem. Not until one looks for some time does an even more significant observation emerge concerning the pervasive similarities in the midst of all this diversity.

Every human group that anthropologists have studied has spoken a language. The language always has a lexicon and a grammar. The lexicon is not a haphazard collection of vocalisations, but is highly organised; it always has pronouns, means for dealing with time, space, and number, words to represent true and false, the basic concepts necessary for propositional logic. The grammar has distinguishable levels of structure, some phonological, some syntactic. The phonology always contains both vowels and consonants, and the phonemes can always be described in terms of distinctive features drawn from a limited set of possibilities. The syntax always specifies rules for grouping elements sequentially into phrases and sentences, rules governing normal intonation, rules for transforming some types of sentences into other types.

The nature and importance of these common properties, called "linguistic universals," are only beginning to emerge as our knowledge of the world's languages grows more systematic.[11] These universals appear even in languages that developed with a minimum of interaction. One is forced to assume, therefore, either that (*a*) no other kind of linguistic practices are conceivable, or that (*b*) something in the biological makeup of human beings favours languages having these similarities. Only a moment's reflection is needed to reject (*a*). When one considers the variety of artificial languages developed in mathematics, in the communication sciences, in the use of computers, in symbolic logic, and elsewhere, it soon becomes apparent that the universal features of natural languages are not the only ones possible. Natural languages are, in fact, rather special and often seem unnecessarily complicated.

A popular belief regards human language as a more or less free creation of the human intellect, as if its elements were chosen arbitrarily and could be combined into meaningful utterances by any rules that strike our collective fancy. The assumption is implicit, for example, in Wittgenstein's well-known conception of "the language game." This metaphor, which casts valuable light on many aspects of language, can, if followed blindly, lead one to think that all linguistic rules are just as arbitrary as, say, the rules of chess or football. As Lenneberg has pointed out, however, it makes a great deal of sense to inquire into the biological basis for language, but very little to ask about the biological foundations of card games.[12]

Man is the only animal to have a combinatorially productive language. In the jargon of biology, language is "a species-specific form of behaviour." Other animals have signalling systems of various kinds and for various purposes—but only man has evolved this particular and highly improbable form of communication. Those who think of language as a free and spontaneous intellectual invention are also likely to believe that any animal with a brain sufficiently large to support a high level of intelligence can acquire a language. This assumption is demonstrably false. The human brain is not just an ape brain enlarged; its extra size is less important than its different structure. Moreover, Lenneberg has pointed out that nanocephalic dwarfs, with brains half the normal size but grown on the human blueprint, can use language reasonably well, and even mongoloids, not intelligent enough to perform the simplest functions for themselves, can acquire the rudiments.[13] Talking and understanding language do *not* depend on being intelligent or having a large brain. They depend on "being human."

Serious attempts have been made to teach animals to speak. If words were conditioned responses, animals as intelligent as chimpanzees or porpoises should be able to learn them. These attempts have uniformly failed in the past and, if the argument here is correct, they will always fail in the future—for just the same reason that attempts to teach fish to walk or dogs to fly would fail. Such efforts misconstrue the basis for our linguistic competence: they fly in the face of biological facts.[14]

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[11] *Universals of Language*, edited by J. Greenberg (M.I.T. Technology Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

[12] E. Lenneberg, "Language, Evolution, and Purposive Behavior," in *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1960).

[13] E. Lenneberg, I. A. Nichols, and E. R. Rosenberger, "Primitive Stages of Language Development in Mongolism," in the *Proceedings* of the 42nd. Annual Meeting (1962) of the *Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Diseases*.

[14] The belief that animals have, or could have, languages is as old as man's interest in the evolution of his special talent, but the truth of the matter has long been known. Listen, for example, to Max Müller (*Three Lectures on the Science of Language*) in 1889: "It is easy enough to show that animals communicate, but this is a fact which has never been doubted. Dogs who growl and bark leave no doubt in the minds of other dogs or cats, or even of man, of what they mean, but

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HUMAN LANGUAGE must be such that a child can acquire it. He acquires it, moreover, from parents who have no idea how to explain it to him. No careful schedule of rewards for correct or punishments for incorrect utterances is necessary. It is sufficient that the child be allowed to grow up naturally in an environment where language is used.

The child's achievement seems all the more remarkable when we recall the speed with which he accomplishes it and the limitations of his intelligence in other respects. It is difficult to avoid an impression that infants are little machines specially designed by nature to perform this particular learning task.

I believe this analogy with machines is worth pursuing. If we could imagine what a language-learning automaton would have to do, it would dramatise—and perhaps even clarify—what a child can do. The linguist and logician Noam Chomsky has argued that the description of such an automaton would comprise our hypothesis about the child's innate ability to learn languages or (to borrow a term from Ferdinand de Saussure) his innate *faculté de langage*.[15]

CONSIDER WHAT INFORMATION a language-learning automaton would be given to work with. Inputs to the machine would include a finite set of sentences, a finite set of non-sentences accompanied by some signal that they were incorrect, some way to indicate that one item is a repetition or elaboration or transformation of another, and some access to a universe of perceptual objects and events associated with the sentences. Inside the machine there would be a computer so programmed as to extract from these inputs the nature of the language, *i.e.*, the particular syntactic rules by which sentences are generated, and the rules that associate with each syntactic structure a particular phonetic representation and semantic interpretation. The important question, of course, is what programme of instructions would have to be given to the computer.

We could instruct the computer to discover any imaginable set of rules that might, in some formal sense of the term, constitute a grammar. This approach—the natural one if we believe that human languages can be infinitely diverse and various—is doomed from the start. The computer would have to evaluate an infinitude of possible grammars; with only a finite corpus of evidence it would be impossible, even if sufficient time were available for computation, to arrive at any unique solution.

A language-earning automaton could not possibly discover a suitable grammar unless some strong *a priori* assumptions were built into it from the start. These assumptions would limit the alternatives that the automaton considered—limit them presumably to the range defined by linguistic universals. The automaton would test various grammars of the appropriate form to see if they would generate all of the sentences and none of the non-sentences. Certain aspects would be tested before others; those found acceptable would be preserved for further evaluation. If we wished the automaton to replicate a child's performance, the order in which these aspects would be evaluated could only be decided after careful analysis of the successive stages of language acquisition in human children.

The actual construction of such an automaton is, of course, far beyond our reach at the present time. That is not the point. The lesson to learn from such speculations is that the whole project would be impossible unless the automaton—and so, presumably, a child—knew in advance to look for particular kinds of regularities and correspondences, to discover rules of a rather special kind uniquely characteristic of human language in general.

The features that human infants are prepared to notice sharply limit the structure of any human language. Even if one imagines creating by decree a Newspeak in which this generalisation were false, within one generation it would have become true again.

Psycholinguistics does not deal with social practices determined arbitrarily either by caprice or intelligent design, but with practices that grow organically out of the biological nature

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growling and barking are not language, nor do they even contain the elements of language."

Unfortunately, Müller's authority, great as it was, did not suffice, and in 1890 we hear Samuel Butler ("Thought and Language," in his *Collected Essays*) reply that although "growling and barking cannot be called very highly specialised language," still there is "a sayer, a sayee, and a covenanted symbol designedly applied. Our own speech is vertebrated and articulated by means of nouns, verbs, and the rules of grammar. A dog's speech is invertebrate, but I do not see how it is possible to deny that it possesses all the essential elements of language."

Müller and Butler did not argue about the facts of animal behaviour which Darwin had described. Their disagreement arose more directly from differences of opinion about the correct definition of the term "language." To-day our definitions of human language are more precise, so we can say with correspondingly more precision why Butler was wrong.

[15] N. Chomsky, "Explanatory Models in Linguistics," in *Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science*, edited by E. Wagel, P. Suppes, and A. Tarski (Stanford Univ. Press, Stanford, 1962, pp. 528–550).

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of man and the linguistic capacities of human infants. To that extent, at least, it is possible to define an area of empirical fact well within the reach of our scientific methods.

ANOTHER LINE of scientific investigation is opened up by the observation that we do not always follow our own rules. If this were not so, of course, we would not speak of rules, but of the laws of language. The fact that we make mistakes, and that we can know we made mistakes, is central to the psycholinguistic problem. Before we can see the empirical issue this entails, however, we should first draw a crucial distinction between theories of language and theories of the users of language.

There is nothing in the linguistic description of a language to indicate what mistakes will occur. Mistakes result from the psychological limitations of people who use the language, not from the language itself. It would be meaningless to state rules for making mistakes.

A formal characterisation of a natural language in terms of a set of elements and rules for combining those elements must inevitably generate an infinitude of possible sentences that will never occur in actual use. Most of these sentences are too complicated for us. There is nothing mysterious about this. It is very similar to the situation in arithmetic where a student may understand perfectly the rules for multiplication, yet find that some multiplication problems are too difficult for him to do "in his head," *i.e.*, without extending his memory capacity by the use of pencil and paper.

There is no longest grammatical sentence. There is no limit to the number of different grammatical sentences. Moreover, since the number of elements and rules is finite, there must be some rules and elements that can recur any number of times in a grammatical sentence. Chomsky has even managed to pinpoint a kind of recursive operation in language that, in principle, lies beyond the power of any finite device to perform indefinitely often. Compare these sentences:

(*R*) *Remarkable is the rapidity of the motion of the wing of the hummingbird.*
(*L*) *The hummingbird's wing's motion's rapidity is remarkable.*
(*E*) *The rapidity that the motion that the wing that the hummingbird has has has is remarkable.*

When you parse these sentences you find that the phrase structure of (*R*) dangles off to the right; each prepositional phrase hangs to the noun in the prepositional phrase preceding it. In (*R*), therefore, we see a type of recurring construction that has been called right-branching. Sentence (*L*), on the other hand, is left-branching; each possessive modifies the possessive immediately following. Finally, (*E*) is an onion; it grows by embedding sentences within sentences. Inside "The rapidity is remarkable" we first insert "the motion is rapid" by a syntactic transformation that permits us to construct relative clauses, and so we obtain "The rapidity that the motion has is remarkable." Then we repeat the transformation, this time inserting "the wing has motion" to obtain "The rapidity that the motion that the wing has has is remarkable." Repeating the transformation once more gives (*E*).

It is intuitively obvious that, of these three types of recursive operations, self-embedding (*E*) is psychologically the most difficult. Although they seem grammatical by any reasonable standard of grammar, such sentences never occur in ordinary usage because they exceed our cognitive capacities. Chomsky's achievement was to prove rigorously that any language that does *not* restrict this kind of recursive embedding contains sentences that cannot be spoken or understood by devices, human or mechanical, with finite memories. Any device that uses these rules must remember each left portion until it can be related to its corresponding right portion; if the memory of the user is limited, but the number of admissible left portions is not, it is inevitable that some admissible sentences will exceed the capacity of the user to process them correctly.[16]

It is necessary, therefore, to distinguish between a description of the language in terms of the rules that a person *knows* and uses and a description of that person's *performance* as a user of the rules. The distinction is sometimes criticised as "psycholatry" by strict adherents of behaviourism; "knowing" is considered too mentalistic and subjective, therefore unscientific. The objection cannot be taken seriously. Our conception of the rules that a language-user knows is indeed a hypothetical construct, not something observed directly in his behaviour. But if such hypotheses were to be forbidden, science in general would become an empty pursuit.

Given a reasonable hypothesis about the rules that a language-user knows, the exploration of his limitations in following those rules is proper work for an experimental psychologist. "Psychology should assist us," a great linguist once said, "in understanding what is going on in the mind of speakers, and more particularly how they are led to deviate from previously existing rules in consequence of conflicting

[16] N. Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures* (Mouton, The Hague, 1957).

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tendencies." Otto Jespersen made this request of psychology in 1924; now at last the work is beginning.[17]

ONE EXAMPLE. Stephen Isard and I asked Harvard undergraduates to memorise several sentences that differed in degree of self-embedding. For instance, the twenty-two words in the right-branching sentence, "We cheered the football squad that played the team that brought the mascot that chased the girls that were in the park," can be re-arranged to give one, two, three, or four self-embeddings; with four it becomes, "The girls (that the mascot (that the team (that the football squad (that we cheered) played) brought) chased) were in the park." One self-embedding caused no difficulty; it was almost as easy to memorise as the sentence with none. Three or four embeddings were most difficult. When the sentence had two self-embeddings—"The team (that the football squad (that we cheered) played) brought the mascot that chased the girls that were in the park"—some subjects found it as easy to memorise as sentences with zero or one embedding, others found it as difficult as sentences with three or four. That is to say, everybody can manage one embedding, some people can manage two, but everybody has trouble with three or more.

Records of eye movements while people are reading such sentences show that the trouble begins with the long string of verbs, "cheered played brought," at which point all grasp of the sentence structure crumbles and they are left with a random list of verbs. This is just what would be expected from a computer executing a programme that did not make provision for a sub-routine to refer to itself, *i.e.*, that was not recursive. If our ability to handle this type of self-embedded recursion is really as limited as the experiment indicates, it places a strong limitation on the kinds of theories we can propose to explain our human capacities for processing information.

ON THE SIMPLER levels of our psycholinguistic hierarchy the pessimists are wrong; much remains there to be explored and systematised by scientific methods. How far these methods can carry us remains an open question. Although syntax seems well within our grasp and techniques for studying semantic systems are now beginning to emerge, understanding and belief raise problems well beyond the scope of linguistics. Perhaps it is there that scientific progress will be forced to halt.

No psychological process is more important or difficult to understand than understanding, and nowhere has scientific psychology proved more disappointing to those who have turned to it for help. The complaint is as old as scientific psychology itself. It was probably first seen clearly by Wilhelm Dilthey, who called for a new kind of psychology—a kind to which Karl Jaspers later gave the name *"verstehende Psychologie"*—and in one form or another the division has plagued psychologists ever since. Obviously a tremendous gulf separates the interpretation of a sentence from the understanding of a personality, a society, a historical epoch. But the gap is narrowing. Indeed, one can even pretend to see certain similarities between the generative theory of speech perception discussed above and the reconstructive intellectual processes that have been labelled *verstehende*. The analogy may some day prove helpful, but how optimistic one dares feel at the present time is not easily decided.

Meanwhile, the psycholinguists will undoubtedly continue to advance as far as they can. It should prove interesting to see how far that will be.

[17] *The Philosophy of Grammar* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1924, p. 344).

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Robert Lowell

Brunetto Latini

Canto XV of Dante's Inferno
(For Lillian Hellman)

And now we walked along the solid mire
above a brook whose fuming mist protected
water and banks from the surrounding fire.
Just as the men of Flanders threw up huge
earthworks to stop the sea that always threatens
their fields and cattle between Ghent and Bruges,
or Paduans along the Brenta spread
out dykes to shield their towns and towers against
spring thawing the Carinzian watershed—
on such a plan the evil engineer,
whoever he was, had laid his maze of dykes,
though on a smaller scale, and with less care.
By now we'd gone much deeper underground,
and left the bleeding wood so far behind
I'd have seen nothing, if I'd looked around.
We met a company of spirits here,
trooping below us on the sand. Each one
stared closely at our faces—as men peer
at one another under the new moon,
or an old tailor squints into his needle,
these puckered up their brows and glowered. Soon,
I saw a man whose eyes devoured me, saying,
"This is a miracle." He seized my sleeve,
and as I felt his touch, I fixed my eyes
with such intensity on his crusted face,
that its disfigurement could not prevent
my recognising who he was. "Oh, Oh,"
I answered groaning, as I stretched my hand
to touch his arm, "are you here Ser Brunetto?"
He answered, "Do not be displeased, my Son,
if Brunetto Latini turn and walk a little

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downward with you, and lets this herd pass on."
Then I, "I'll go with you, or we can sit
here talking as we used to in the past,
if you desire it, and my guide permit."
"Oh Son," he answered, "anyone who stands
still a moment will lie here a hundred years,
helpless to brush the sparks off with his hands.
Move on, I'll follow. Soon enough I must
rejoin my little group of friends who walk
with me lamenting their eternal lust."
Then since I dared not leave my bank and move
over the flames of his low path, I bent
my head to walk with reverence and love.
Then he, "What brings you here before your day?
Is it by accident, or Providence?
Who is this man who guides you on your way?"
I answered, "In the world that lies serene
and shining over us, I lost my path,
even before the first young leaves turned green.
Yesterday morning when my steps had come
full circle, this man appeared. He turned me round,
and now he guides me on my journey home."
"Oh Son," said he, "if you pursue your star,
you cannot fail to reach the glorious harbour.
And if the beautiful world, less sinister,
had let me live a little longer, I too
might have sustained your work and brought you comfort,
seeing how heaven has befriended you.
But that perverted and ungrateful flock
that held the hills with Catiline, and then
descended, hard and sterile as their rock,
to govern Florence, hate you for the good
you do; and rightly! Could they wish to see
the sweet fig ripen on their rotten wood?
Surely, they've earned their reputation, blind,
fratricidal, avaricious, proud.
Oh root their filthy habits from your mind!
Fortune will load such honours on your back
that Guelf and Ghibelline will hunger for you.
But beat them from the pasture. Let the beasts
eat themselves sick on their own carcasses
that heap the streets, but spare the tender flower,
if one should rise above their swamp and mess—
some flower in which the fragile, sacred seed
of ancient Roman virtue still survives
in Florence, that vulture's nest of lies and greed."

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"Master," I said, "you would not walk here now
cut off from human nature, if my prayers
had had an answer. I remember how
I loved you, sitting at your knees—all thought
fixed on your fatherly and gentle face,
when in the world, from hour to hour, you taught
me how a man becomes eternal. Oh
Master, as long as I draw breath and live,
men shall remember you and what I owe.
Your words about my future shall remain
with other prophesies I keep to give
a Lady, who if I reach her, will explain.
This much I know: If I can bear the stings
of my own heavy conscience, I will face
whatever good or evil Fortune brings.
This promise of good fortune has been made
before this; so, let Fortune whirl her wheel
at random, and the peasant work his spade."
Then Virgil, turning backward with one hand
lifted in wonder, mused at me, and said:
"He who knows how to listen shall understand."
Dwelling upon his words, I did not stop
eagerly briefing Ser Brunetto, and asked,
"Who are the most illustrious in your group?"
And he, "It's right to know a few of us,
but fitting I be silent on the rest;
our time's too short to squander on such dross.
In one word, we were scholars in our time,
great men of letters, famous in the world,
we lost and ruined with one common crime.
Priscian goes with us on this dismal turf,
and Francesco d'Accorso; you can see,
if you have any liking for such scurf,
the man the Servants' Servant chose to serve
him on the Arno, then on the Bacchilione,
where he laid down his ill-extended nerve.
I would say more to you, but must not stand
forever talking, speech must have an end.
I see fresh steam is stirring from the sand,
and men I would avoid are coming. Give
me no pity. Read my *Tesoro*, in
my book, my treasure, I am still alive."
Then he turned back, and he seemed one of those
who run for the green cloth through the green field
at Verona . . . and seemed more like the one
who wins the roll of cloth, than those who lose.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Middle East & West

PROFESSOR BERNARD LEWIS' scintillating essay in ENCOUNTER [March] provokes the more topical question of Western policy in the Middle East. On his analysis, the West and the Arab World are bound to pursue different and to some extent antipathetic courses; there is no hope of that eventual integration of ideas, outlooks, and policies which could be the objective, for instance, between North and Latin America. If East is East and West is West, what happens when the twain meet, as they must do all the time? And what, if any, should be the guiding principles of Western policy in its dealings with the Middle Eastern nations?

The West may here be taken to mean, for clarity, Britain and the United States; for these are the only Western countries which deploy any power in the area, and pursue activist policies there, besides being the major partners in Middle Eastern oil. France has lately shown signs of seeking to revive her former position of special influence and interest in the Levant, but the French are a special case.

The guide to policies cannot be found in such familiar phrases as "their aim is the maintenance of peace and stability in the area." Peace is no doubt to be preferred to war, here as everywhere in the world, if only because of the danger of escalation from a local affray to a major conflict sucking in the great Powers. But to leave the point there begs many questions: *e.g.*, whether Western countries should sometimes intervene to prevent war by over-awing the potential war-maker, or whether the Western presence is not itself a potential source of war. "Stability" is a still vaguer signpost. It may mean different things to different parties: the Arabs claim that there can be no stability while Israel remains as she is; the Israelis that there can be no stability until she is recognised and secure. Internal stability generally means continuity for the existing régimes—yet Western powers have often no interest in supporting them and little means of doing so, and certainly ought not to be bound to them longer or more closely than expediency requires.

Better criteria may perhaps be found by starting from cases and examining three key problems, in which Western policies are undoubtedly engaged, respectively in the economic, political and strategic spheres, namely, the problems of Oil, Israel, and the Aden base.

STRANGE, HOW DIFFICULT it is, even with the most coldly critical effort, to disentangle the economic problem of oil from all the strands of emotion and *haute politique* that envelop it. It suits the oil companies that this should be so, and probably the Governments of the oil-bearing States too; for it enables them to summon to their aid, on either side in their financial wrestling match, a popular opinion which is much more impressed by legends of exploitation or of strategic interest than by statistics and accountancy. The basic facts are that roughly 40 per cent of the world's output of oil, and 60 per cent of its known oil reserves, are in the Middle East—and that oil is by far the largest Middle Eastern export, on which its future economic and social development depends more than upon any other resource or potential. In these circumstances there would seem to be a natural partnership of interest between West and Middle East in the orderly and continued extraction of oil for sale on world markets. This partnership is furthered by the fact that the Soviet bloc not only has ample oil resources of its own but is prevented by geographical factors from taking Middle Eastern oil on economic terms. Since the West can get oil elsewhere, whereas the Middle East has nowhere but the West to sell the great bulk of its oil, the oil-producing States are even more concerned, in these broad terms, to make the most of the partnership of interest than are the oil-using States.

Middle Eastern oil is much cheaper to produce than that of any other large area. In a world of free trade, cut-throat competition, and unlimited extraction of resources, Arab oil would drive out almost all the rest, except oil consumed near to points of production in the Americas and Asia, where the extra cost of transport of Middle Eastern oil would exceed its margin of advantage at well-head. But such a system would be disastrous for the Middle East, which would get little more than production cost for its oil, while its principal natural asset would be draining away at twice the present rate of extraction. Again, there is a partnership

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of interest in a system of combines and agreements holding up the world price of oil and creating a large zone of clear profit on Middle Eastern oil, which is shared between the parties.

But in what ratio and on what terms? There, of course, is the rub. The proportion of royalties going to the producing States has been rising, as everyone knows, and may rise further. OPEC has been formed as a trade union of producers, no doubt in the hope of putting a concerted squeeze on the extracting and marketing firms. But its power to do so is limited by several factors: by internal competition and rivalry; by its inclusion of non-Middle Eastern countries whose interests are often different; by the self-destructive effect of the ultimate trade-union weapon, the strike; and, in the last resort, by the fact that unless the oil companies' share of the gross revenue is enough to pay for the costs of production, transport, and marketing (and to leave a profit comparable to that obtained on their other operations) they will switch elsewhere. All this gives room for manoeuvre, though not much on the companies' side, since the overall profit margin on oil handled by one of the big international concerns is less than a penny per gallon. The upshot, though of weighty economic importance to the two Western Powers chiefly involved, cannot be considered a vital national interest of theirs. If the foreign exchange gained from the present conduct of Middle Eastern oil business were to shrink, their balances of payments would be damaged, but certainly not fatally. What does vitally concern them is the flow of oil itself.

Enough has been said to suggest that major dislocation of that flow by the oil-producing States themselves—the producers' strike—is very far indeed from their interest. The "lesson of Mossadeq" has been well learnt. For the period for which a cutting-off of oil might be attempted by the Middle Eastern States, whether for political reasons or as an economic sanction, the West could get by with its reserves, oil in transit, alternative sources, and emergency restrictions on consumption. Only if the motive of the cut-off were external to the Middle East, and therefore dissociated from its economic interests, would such action be liable to become really dangerous. Therefore the true vital interest of the West (represented by Britain and the United States) in this oil problem is to prevent such penetration of hostile power and influence into the Middle East from outside as would induce the oil-producing States to act contrary to their own national interests.

This penetration might be ideological, or it might be physical. The former possibility is a particular example of a risk that is world-wide, and not peculiarly grave in the Middle East. The latter needs further examination. Russian expansion to the Persian Gulf has been a danger in the background since long before the Bolshevik Revolution. Of all possible changes on the political map of the world, the establishment of Soviet political control and military power through Persia to the Gulf would do more than any other to upset, to our disfavour, the global strategic balance. In that balance, the Sino-Soviet concentration of power in the great land mass is offset by Western domination of the oceans. The Indian Ocean and its shores are indeed remote from sources of European and North American power, but at least no one else deploys power there. The neutralism of that theatre, coupled with our own presence in sufficient strength to keep other external powers out, is all that is needed. Russian power on the shores of the Persian Gulf would smash the whole system. Nor is its penetration there a remote fantasy. The possibility of intervention to stop an incursion of Soviet authority and military control, through puppets, is one that must haunt the minds and influence the planning of Western strategists and statesmen.

THERE IS A TENDENCY nowadays to belittle CENTO, the alliance of the "northern tier" from Turkey to Pakistan which had such an inauspicious beginning as "the Baghdad Pact." But in this light it has even more importance than, say, SEATO. And there is no doubt that its life and strength at its comparatively soft centre are greatly enhanced by the physical presence of Western power, to the exclusion of any rival, at its back in the Persian Gulf. That power is locally small, but because it is exclusive it may be enough, and being there, with territorial footholds like Bahrein from which to operate, it can be reinforced. In the absence of other strategic assets in Asia and the Indian Ocean it would be much too remote and isolated to be a serious factor in a world struggle. At present, it depends upon the base at Aden.

One might say that, for purposes of global strategy, if Aden did not exist it would have to be invented. Ingenious minds, concerned with the risks and liabilities of a base on the Arabian mainland, with a hinterland exposed to the temptations of Arab nationalism, have proposed island alternatives to Aden as a base in the western Indian Ocean. This might well have to be the ultimate answer, but it is obviously one for the long term. For the present, and for a long while to come, Aden must remain a British or allied base as an essential support, not for any positive strategy, but for the negative though no less vital purpose of securing the Middle East from penetration by any potentially hostile external power.

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Although this objective can be rightly claimed to be in the interest of the Middle Eastern countries themselves, for as neutralists they do not want their homelands to be a cockpit of world conflict, whether "cold" or "hot," it is unlikely that they will see it so. To them, the Aden situation is a relic of imperialism and an affront to Arab independence. Attempts to subvert the peoples of the colony and the Federation will undoubtedly continue. They need not be successful. But they will be accompanied by a barrage of attacks at the United Nations and elsewhere, and to keep ourselves at Aden will require stern efforts, not only of diplomacy and political skill, but also of willpower, in the face of difficulties and criticisms on all hands, from friends as well as foes. The will to stay and to govern and to succeed is often more important than physical strength or political cunning. Some residue must surely remain, sufficient for the goverance of a few outposts. This exercise of will would, of course, be much easier to perform if it were firmly and consistently supported by the policies of the U.S.A., whose interest it equally serves, as well at Singapore as at Aden. And this in turn implies closer co-ordination and agreement of policies in regard to the surrounding region than in the past: in Aden's case, in regard to the Yemen, the Gulf Sheikhdoms, and Somalia.

IN THE LARGER CONTEXT of the Arab world, the problem of Israel has a unique importance. If it had to be seen in terms of the public Arab purpose, loudly proclaimed ever since 1948, to eliminate Zionism and the Israeli State from the map of the Middle East, it would, of course, directly concern and involve the Western powers. It would concern them as members of the United Nations pledged to uphold the integrity of every other member, in this case a member to whom they (*i.e.*, Britain and America) have special obligations of honour from Israel's origin and character. But, whatever Arab propaganda may say, to "drive the Jews into the sea" is not her neighbours' actual purpose to-day. They know that even if they had the military superiority, and even if the West did not intervene, they could neither exterminate nor permanently govern the Jews of Israel. If they were asked to say in frankness and confidence what were their realistic aims in regard to Israel—"realistic," that is to say, in their own eyes—they might answer: to limit and control Israel's military power so that she could never attempt *revanche* or be a threat to their security; to confine her to a smaller area (roughly the United Nations partition plan *minus* the Jordanian bulge on the west bank); and to compel the resettlement of the Arab refugees at Israel's expense and on soil now Israel's.

These objects are, in practice, scarcely more attainable than total elimination. They could be attained, as a whole, only by such a military victory over Israel as would oblige her to make peace on any terms short of unconditional surrender and national suicide. And that is unthinkable with the present balance of military power, even if the West did not appear in force to prevent it. A shrewd Arab political strategist might reply that, if the objects could not be achieved all at one blow, they might be achieved "piece by piece." If enough economic pressure is put on Israel; if she can be made to waste too much of her substance on arms and defensive alertness; if she can be induced to make an aggressive move which would cause the Arabs rather than Israel to claim support from the United Nations; if the ring of Arab countries around her can be solidified, perhaps as a result of changes of régime which would reduce their divisions—if these and other things can be caused to happen, the time may come when she must yield to pressure, or when Arab military superiority will be so certain that a swift war could present the Western powers with a *fait accompli* which they dare not try to upset.

All this may be wishful thinking, but it represents a policy; and whether or not it is successful it is bound to give rise to incidents on which the Western powers will have to make up their minds how to act. What is their basic and continuing interest? It is to keep out, and to keep others out. They cannot afford to become involved in the Arab-Israeli strife, but their capacity to stay un-involved depends upon the strife remaining local.

ONCE AGAIN the key to Western policy in the Middle East is seen to be the object of resisting the incursion of Soviet power. This object is not inconsistent with Middle Eastern neutralism, which must imply freedom of choice between the West and the Communist bloc in trade and aid and even in sources of arms, though this is the most dangerous form of connection. Nor is it inconsistent with Arab unity. On the contrary, a strong and solid Arab world, determined to keep itself out of global struggles, would be more resistant and less tempting to Communist adventures than a series of weak and squabbling Arab states. The object is, however, inconsistent with tolerating the establishment in the Middle East of a Communist State, obeying its master's voice in Moscow. Intervention to prevent or reverse this would be a possible corollary. Such intervention could take many other forms than military.

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All that is negative. But the object cannot be pursued without positive policies which, without overselling Western values, help the Middle Eastern lands to prefer a non-Communist future: policies in regard to aid, commerce, propaganda, and diplomatic influence. The long-term objective is to persuade the Arab world and its fringes that, while they do not want the West, the West does not want to interfere with them, so long as they avoid letting other outside powers do so; and that Arab and Western aspirations and ways of life, though inherently different (as Professor Bernard Lewis has demonstrated) are not inimical.

H. V. Hodson

Letter from Paris

Parlez-vous Desperanto?

By Richard Mayne

THE PAPERBACK revolution was slow to reach France—perhaps because so many French books were paper-backed already. To complete the paradox, it began with a paperbound version of a popular reprint series previously notable for its hard covers. This was the old *Collection Pourpre*, in which a whole generation read André Gide and Colette; some ten years ago now, it began to give way to the *Livres de poche*. True, the *Que sais-je?* series had long been initiating autodidacts to anything from Jansenism to Obesity: but the *Livres de poche* swept all before them. For one thing, they withstood rough treatment even better than their parent collection; for another, they were slightly cheaper; while neither required the maddening twenty minutes with a paper-knife demanded by books of traditional French format—presumably on the theory that true bibliophiles still send their books to be cut and bound in half-calf before actually reading them.

Another secret of the pocket-book's success, I fancy, is that its purchaser has the feeling of not really having bought a book. Just as a train journey provides the pretext for laying in a stock of glossy magazines that no sane person would otherwise dream of paying money for, so the paperback on the station or airport bookstall, however expensive, seems a mild indulgence rather than a serious purchase—with the result that one's shelves are quickly filled with classics in small print whose mere possession gives one the illusion of being well-read. Here, at least, in suburban trains and the Paris *métro*, while pale students still memorise manuals of algebra and administrative law, handy pocket editions of Saint-Exupéry, Robbe-Grillet, and even the General's Memoirs seem to rival the newspapers as the commuter's staple diet. So far, there are about half a dozen smartly-produced series, selling at three shillings and upwards: apart from the *Livres de poche*, with well over a thousand titles, the most notable are Flammarion's *J'ai lu* collection, with about two hundred, the twin series *10:18* and *Voici*, with another two hundred together, and Gallimard's *Idées*, with less than a hundred titles yet issued, but like the others growing apace. A new attraction in the Quartier Latin, in fact, is a bookshop opposite the Café Flore which sells nothing but paperbacks: open even on Sunday evenings, it does a brisk after-dinner trade against a background of *France-musique*, the R.T.F.'s all-music station.

French paperbacks differ only marginally from their English and American counterparts, although in some respects they seem to have made a more ambitious start. The *Livres de poche* and *J'ai lu* rely fairly heavily on reprints of popular novels and detective or adventure stories; but they also include respectable numbers of French classics, of which *J'ai lu*'s selection from the 18th-century Encyclopædists is probably the most recondite. Sartre's and Camus' novels are well represented in the *Livres de poche*, while the *Idées* series has reproduced some of their non-fiction; and the *10:18* collection is offering an assortment of "new novelists" which in addition to Robbe-Grillet includes Michel Butor, Marguerite Duras, Robert Pinget, Nathalie Sarraute, and Claude Simon. Very few have resorted to mis-

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leadingly sexy covers and two series at least, to my own mild surprise, make a feature of religious books.

Reprints, of course, are the mainstay of most paperbacks; but original works are also creeping in. Two collections are devoted to them: *Kiosques*, which prints studies of the press such as Abel Chatelain's *"Le Monde" et ses lecteurs*, and *Archives*, a new set of documentary dossiers on subjects so far ranging from Agincourt to Auschwitz. *Poche-Club*, yet another collection, has just issued a first novel by an author previously unpublished; and *Idées*, among other new works, caused the sensation of this spring's publishing season by bringing out what *Le Monde* described as the "bombshell" by Etiemble, *Parlez-vous franglais?*

IF THE PRESS HADN'T already made clear what Etiemble is getting at, the cover of his book would do so unmistakably. *"Vous serez relax!"* it quotes from one advertisement; *"Eye-Liner avec Eye-Shadow"* from another; *"la robe-jumper"* from a women's magazine. A short walk in Paris, especially near the Champs-Elysées, will produce countless such examples of anglicised French—*"Le Drugstore," "Le Quick-lunch," "Le Parking," "Le Snack."* A department store advertises bespoke suits measured by means of *"le Bodygraph"*; the local newsagent sells the adventure of "Bug's [sic] Bunny"; a secretary promises *"Je vais le chécker"*; a motorised colleague offers one *"un lift."* Even without clip-joints which announce "English spoken" or stores that command one to "Start shopping now," the lot of the anglophone visitor is getting easier every day. Not so, of course, that of the teacher of French.

All this makes an amusing subject for *o-tempora-o-mores* articles by linguistic purists; and large numbers of pretty dreary pens have been busy about it for some time. At first sight, Etiemble's book seems like an expanded version of one of these wowsers' complaints. It starts with a short story written almost entirely in *franglais*, about a young man who meets and seduces *"une stewardess,"* then loses her to *"un reporter"* before ending up, rather existentially, at the dentist's where he's offered *"un inlay."* So far so good, despite some tiresome repetitions—seventy-five of them on a rough count. Later in the book there are similar forays into the linguistic jungles of teenage lore, women's (and men's) beauty aids, children's toys and comics, advertising, and sport. If anyone still needed convincing that French is borrowing words from English, the indefatigable Etiemble has done the trick.

He also shows, with what first looks like playful pedantry, that in the process of borrowing, sense and consistency are often lost. Why should walking become *"le footing"* and footing (or prestige) *"le standing"*? Since when has a tennis-player been *"un tennisman"*? Is *"knickerbockers"* singular or plural? Where does one wear *"un short"* and *"un pull"*? What are the thirteen different ways of spelling *"le sheriff"*? How should a Frenchman pronounce *"le yachting"*—like "yak" or like "yashmak"? Why is it *"un bottle-party"* but *"une cheese-party"*? Should the French for "beefsteak" be spelt with a *c* or a *q*, or neither? What is "a beefsteak of veal"?

More serious than these aberrations are instances where French words are losing precision or shedding shades of meaning under the influence of English. Rather as the word "disinterested" is losing its proper sense of "impartial" because too many people think it means "uninterested," so words like *"offense," "réaliser," "actuellement,"* which used to be traps for the unwary translator, are coming more and more to adopt the meaning of their "false friends." Even the word *"arriviste,"* more or less naturalised into English, is giving way to *"carriériste,"* modelled on *"careerist"*; while *"de luxe,"* in advertisements for flats, cars, and furniture, is more and more being replaced by *"de grand standing."* In many cases, it's hard to see the improvement.

SUCH SHIFTS OF SENSE and strange adoptions have long been familiar; and when Etiemble takes arms against *"le smoking"* or *"le shake-hand,"* one suspects he's fighting for a cause already lost. His preference for *"champoing"* over *"shampooing"* won't change the habits of hairdressers, any more than it's likely to make them adopt the English "shampoo" or the Hindi *"champna."* Proposals like *"la vacancelle"* for *"le weekend"* and *"le vivoir"* for *"le living"* or living-room tend to make Frenchmen laugh. And in Etiemble's zeal for purity, he even objects to *"autoroute,"* which is at least more French than *"deufèlegote,"* his would-be gallicisation of "duffle-coat."

Of all Etiemble's targets, easily the most vulnerable is the jargon of advertisements. English readers can readily share his distaste for coinages like *"teenform,"* the "littlest angel" bra, as well as for the cult of suffixes like *"-matic"* (*"acquamatic," "reglomatic," "mascaramatic"*) or *"-rama"* (*"amusorama," "cityrama," "sexy-rama," "stripperama"*), which is still rife despite Balzac's ridicule of it in *Le Père Goriot* well over a century ago. Even in English-speaking countries, not everyone's delighted with "cheeseburger," "superette," or "visibrella," even if he

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can figure out what they mean. But if these specimens are of what Etiemble would call "Anglo-Saxon" origin, others of his painstaking collection (*"Chocorêve," "télébrités," "univerchelle"*) show that France herself hasn't lagged behind in the race to invent a lingo for Yahoos.

The point is worth making, because Etiemble's whole approach is based on the assertion that words of *franglais* are "intrusions" into French, like weeds creeping in from the next-door garden. The image is tempting, but deceptive. Outside of cartoon films, did you ever see a word walking, let alone creeping. These aren't "intrusions": they're adoptions.

LIKE PEOPLE, languages seldom borrow or adopt what they don't need. As Ezra Pound once remarked, "the sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language, and no single language is CAPABLE of expressing all forms and degrees of human comprehension." And purity, if only for this reason, seems a rather sterile linguistic ideal. In Europe, only two countries have come really close to achieving it—Lithuania and Iceland, the latter by dint of deliberately excluding a number of Danish words. This may be fine for modern Icelanders who want to read the Sagas in the original; but why other countries should follow suit remains obscure. In a smart riposte to Etiemble published in *Le Figaro,* Pierre Daninos (the creator of that expatriate francophile "Major Thompson") pointed out that while English is probably the biggest borrower of foreign words, French has also drawn extensively not only on its Latin roots but also on Greek, Arabic, Hindi, Slav, and other varied sources. One of the words that Etiemble himself uses most frequently, *"le sabir"* (in the phrase *"sabir atlantique,"* his synonym for *franglais*) is of Spanish extraction, and used to describe a mixed patois spoken in North Africa and the Levant.

Historically, in fact, any French repugnance for English linguistic imports, or vice versa, looks pretty silly when one reflects that even "beef" and "cow," so often quoted in textbooks on Norman England to contrast the conquerors' French with the vassals' English, both derive ultimately from a common source in the Indo-European *"gwous."* The dispute is between linguistic cousins, not aliens—all the more so in a shrinking world where technical progress and political interdependence make for more and more "culture-contact." It's no accident that in multinational organisations like that of the Common Market *"sabir"* becomes a useful tool. Stylistically, it has its drawbacks: but its concision is often too tempting to resist. *"Conjoncture"* is a handy way of saying "the present state of the business cycle"; *"Sprachregelung"* neatly expresses "the general line to take in a public statement"; and I've yet to see really satisfactory substitutes for "timing" or "package deal." The very nature of traditional French, in particular, points up the comparative brevity with which other languages can express compound ideas. While the English can say "labour-saving" and the Germans *"arbeitsparend,"* Frenchmen are reduced to *"qui économise le travail."* That not only foreigners find this clumsy is shown by some of the examples on which Etiemble pours scorn. *"Prêt-à-porter,"* he rules, should strictly be *"prêt-à-être porté"*; *"la lessive qui lave sans bouillir"* should be *"la lessive qui lave sans qu'on ait besoin de faire boullir le linge."* A snappy line, you'll agree. This doesn't worry Etiemble, who even deplores the fact that French has "lost its declensions and can no longer act like Russian, Polish, or Serbian, which if they accept a foreign word almost always add flourishes which naturalise it." In the present age, this looks almost like rejecting the metric system for the dear old complications of *avoirdupois.*

NEW CONCEPTS, moreover, are bound to require new terminology. In the 16th century, neo-scholastic teachers were ridiculed for discussing "uniformly difform motion." What they were fumbling to describe was uniform acceleration, like that of falling bodies. In Swahili, Etiemble tells us, "air-conditioning" is paraphrased into *"kuingiza hewa baridi kwenye chumba"*—"bringing cold air into a room." He implies that a clumsy periphrasis like this is preferable to the importation of a foreign word: but he doesn't point out that in other climates air-conditioning may heat the air rather than cool it. And although he doesn't flinch at some cumbersome circumlocutions, he's often hard put to it to find effective French words for American or British processes and concepts that France hasn't produced. He claims that Frenchmen never really understood the meaning of *"le missile gap,"* but he offers no concise translation; while for "bulldozer" he can find nothing better than Raymond Queneau's suggestion of *"bouledoseur."*

Nor does the difficulty of finding equivalents stop at technical terms. For several months, *Le Figaro* has followed a new policy of printing foreign words in italics or inverted commas to stem the rising flood of *franglais*: but it's proved impossible to apply this ruling to the sports pages. At the same time, the paper's been asking its readers for their views on terms like *"pin-up"* and *"script-girl"*; but the answers have revealed telling disagreement and gaps.

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The sample of opinions is clearly biased in favour of traditional usage—partly because of *Le Figaro's* rather conservative readership, and partly because people who don't feel strongly about *franglais* are less likely to reply. Even so, as many as thirty per cent of those answering preferred to stick to *"le weekend"* rather than *"la vacancelle"* or even *"la fin de semaine"*; while the useful all-purpose word *"le leader,"* in the majority's opinion, demanded half a dozen different translations according to the context in which it occurred.

Reporting these first results and further explaining its project, *Le Figaro* gave as an example the *franglais* word *"reliable,"* which in traditional French would mean "bindable" as applied to books. In English, said the writer, it means *"d'un fonctionnement sûr."* But he thereby revealed one of the pitfalls of trying to translate *franglais*—since *"d'un functionnement sûr"* would be an odd description of, say, "a reliable chap." To find real equivalents for borrowed English words, and to capture nuance and connotation as well as dictionary definition, the would-be translator requires a grasp of English that not only publicity men but also teachers like Etiemble too often lack.

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANGLAIS? contains about a score of errors, some venial, some not. Mis-spellings ("Guilford," "carrierist," "food pads," "rumsteak," "Mc Carthy") may be misprints or ironic allusions to other people's mistakes: so may Etiemble's admission that he doesn't know enough English to risk playing golf on a "link." But what's one to make of phrases like "the third greater U.S. firm," "to curb an invitation," "to take one's second breath"—all presented as specimens of English, not *franglais*? Quoting *"sucre d'orge"* as a good French expression, Etiemble doesn't mention the theory that its English counterpart, "barley sugar," may derive from *"sucre brûlé"*; and he offers elsewhere some rather shaky translations of his own. Does *"conscience"* adequately translate "insight"? Is "approach" really *"pointe de vue"* rather than *"manière d'aborder"*? Did Macaulay's schoolboy imagine that "valuable" would do for *"valable"*?

"Heat," said Laurence Sterne, "is in proportion to want of true knowledge"; and whatever Etiemble's acquaintance with English, heat is certainly a feature of his book. This makes it rather heavy-going to read to the end: but the effort is worth making, if only to find out what lies behind the extraordinary venom of this 400-page onslaught on imported words. The answer seems to be that *Parlez-vous franglais?* isn't just a purist's defence of the French language: it's also a pocket compendium of anti-American clichés.

At one point, Etiemble expressly rejects the charge of political chauvinism; and elsewhere he adds that he's spent a number of years in the United States. There, it seems, he made notes for a book on America, but lost nine-tenths of them in Algiers in 1943. What that book would have been like is suggested by an article Etiemble published in 1947 in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Les Temps Modernes*. Although printed under the heading CHRONIQUE LITTÉRAIRE, and devoted in part to sarcastic deployment of various American expressions, it was mainly concerned with an exposé of "the American way of life." This, of course, was the heyday of fashionable anti-Americanism on the French Left: Sartre's own grotesque *La putain respectueuse* had appeared in the previous year. Five years later, in the same issue of *Les Temps Modernes* that made public the dispute between Sartre and Camus, Etiemble was still at it, this time more directly attacking *"le sabir atlantique"* but taking obsessive side-swipes at Marshall Aid, NATO, and "Anglo-Saxon colonisation."

In *Parlez-vous franglais?*, Etiemble's political affiliations remain unstated. On one page President de Gaulle is praised for "resisting the pretensions of the dollar," while on another he's mildly taken to task for saying—*à la franglaise*—*"l'actuelle constitution"* instead of *"la constitution actuelle."* Politics, indeed, could well be left out of the argument, if it weren't for the fact that Etiemble drags them in. One after another, the stale old charges are repeated. "The FBI knows everything except the date of the next revolution brewing in the Middle East." America's "way of life" is "against nature"; her cooking is "infantile"; the mental age of her adult population averages thirteen. The "free world" includes Franco, Salazar, Chiang Kai-shek; Anglomania is handing France over to "the managers of General Motors and the Marines of the United Fruit company." In America, Etiemble discovered "the hypocrisy (*tartuferie*) of the State Department and the Pentagon," and Americans' "stupid, shameful, furtive" way of making love. America, it seems, is the land of lynching, anti-semitism, and segregation; the Atlantic alliance is colonising Europe; American capital is ruining it. Nuclear terminology (*"deterrent," "missile gap"*) is designed to deceive Europeans, since "deterrent" really means "reprisals": Europe must become a "third force." Those who question or qualify these assertions, Etiemble suggests, are likely to "have financial links with the United States Embassy."

A less bigoted French student of language, in

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a book published shortly before Etiemble's, remarked that "the collection of *franglais* expressions, if divorced from the general study of vocabulary's structure and modes of change, has less to do with linguistics than with social pastimes." Certainly, for the moment, Etiemble's paperback is a social success—"*un best-seller,*" in the phrase he repeatedly lampoons. But I can't help wondering how many of those who treat it as a joke have tackled the marathon of actually reading it, and discovering exactly what sort of "bombshell" is ticking away in their pockets.

Richard Mayne

English as a "Second Language"

Thoughts after a Journey — By MAX BELOFF

NO COUNTRY is so likely to give a visitor the sense of the ultimate unpredictability of historical events as Israel. The more familiar one is with the amalgam of biblical prophesy, central European nationalism, Western European democracy, and Eastern European socialism, that fused into the Zionist ideology, the greater must seem the contrast between the reality of to-day and the dreams of the precursors. But equally, wherever one touches a problem of to-day one sooner or later comes up against ideological considerations that lead one very far afield—back from the strip of Mediterranean coastline and the bleak Judean hills to the forests, steppes, and small towns of Eastern Europe, to those Jewish communities of the "pale of settlement" which have no longer any physical existence but whose moral legacy is unexhausted.

Let me look then, at one problem which is not peculiar to Israel; it is common to all those countries in Asia and Africa now for the first time after centuries seeking to make their own way in the world. For although the international problems that face Israel would seem to derive largely from its position as an outpost of European settlement and civilisation in a non-European and hostile environment, its external problems are in many cases much more like those of "developing countries" everywhere. Indeed, since *more than half* of its Jewish population now originates not from Europe at all but from the Middle East and North Africa, the similarity of Israel's problems to those of other Asian or of African countries is much more evident than when the State was founded. The particular problem I would select is the problem of "communication."

Language presents all States other than the possessors of one of the world-languages with special difficulties. On the one hand the native language must serve as the vehicle of domestic intercourse, of general culture, and (in the case of a newly enfranchised people) of national cohesion. Indeed the 19th-century history of European nationalisms sometimes reads like a branch of philology. On the other hand, if the citizens of such a country are to take a full part in the advancement of knowledge, in the dissemination of techniques—if the country is not to be excluded from the mainstream of the world's economic, political and cultural life, if indeed independence is to be more than an objective in itself, but is to be an actual instrument of growth—then its élite must have a very far-reaching knowledge of at least one of the world-languages.

Sometimes the choice of language for this purpose may be automatic, and the consequences of the choice, obvious. Tunis must choose French and Nigeria, English. Often the choice will be obvious, but its implications less so. For a country may have the problem of making one of many indigenous languages into a truly national one, while retaining a world-language for use in its international intercourse. And this dual task is one that will confront India, for instance, for more than one generation. The ideology of nation-building and the demands of efficiency may pull in opposite directions.

IN ISRAEL, THE PROBLEMS which face India, Nigeria, and many other new States can be seen on a miniature scale, but in a condition of probably unrivalled complexity. The first choice—that Hebrew should be the country's vernacular and the teaching language in educational institutions at every level including the highest—was reached at an early stage in the

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creation of the "National Home," and long antedates the State itself. The reasons are easy enough to understand; the effort involved may not always be appreciated. For Hebrew had to be re-created as a spoken language from classical or medieval models, and then taught to immigrants speaking a wide variety of other languages. It is true that the majority would have had some acquaintance with Hebrew through the scriptures and the liturgy; still there were differences in pronunciation to contend with. (And if there ever were to be a massive immigration from the Soviet Union—where the traditions of the synagogue have been interrupted—even this preliminary conditioning would be absent.) For immigrants from Europe their original vernacular—German or Russian, Polish or Rumanian, even Yiddish—was in basic structure no preparation for a highly inflected Semitic language. For the large numbers of Arabic speakers among newer immigrants, Hebrew is linguistically-speaking less remote; but with the much lower degree of literacy prevailing among them, the mental effort of learning a foreign language and becoming literate in it cannot be much less.

But these are matters of which time will take care. Children will learn their Hebrew if not at their mother's knee at least at their school desk. As new generations of the Israeli-born reach manhood (and as the sources of available immigrants run dry), Israel will become a Hebrew-speaking nation. It is emphatically not a piece of antiquarian nonsense like making the countrymen of Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw talk Erse; it is a national policy boldly executed and, in the long run, certain of success. But meanwhile what of external communication? What of the second language?

THE CHOICE OF ENGLISH for this purpose has been as whole-hearted as that of Hebrew, but a less obvious one. If one were to go by the world languages naturally accessible to important elements in the population, Russian, German, and even French would seem to have at least equal claims. The Russian Revolution ruled out the first; Hitler made the second unthinkable; French came too late (despite the impressive battle for "French culture" which France is waging in Israel to-day). The thirty years of British rule, the fact that the Jewries of the English-speaking world are the only ones in a position to give Israel serious help—these have settled the issue for good. The older inhabitants of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem may still read Russian or German; the window on the world for the young Israeli is the English language. It is no disrespect to the young Israeli to say that it is often and perhaps increasingly a rather misty window: if he will nearly always know some English, he will rarely know enough for its use not to be a barrier between himself and what it is he wants to know and express.

English is universally taught but taught at a level dictated by the fact of its universality. What Israel needs at any rate for the immediate future is a relatively large number of people who read English with facility, write it correctly, and speak it with sufficient ease for the need to use it not to be embarrassing. It needs to replace among its officials and diplomats, its doctors and engineers, its teachers and experts, not only the present generation of English-speakers, but also those who still speak Russian and German, who provide alternative means of contact with the external world. And it needs to do even more than this if it is to fulfil its plans for becoming an advanced industrial economy, or of continuing to act as a magnet for students, particularly of technical subjects from other developing countries, notably in Africa. It may be picturesque for a Kenyan to be learning Hebrew as part of his studies at Jerusalem; I find it hard to persuade myself that it is useful.

To achieve this objective of teaching English to a high level for those who need it most (from the point of view of their future contribution to the national well-being), one would ideally have to begin by selecting who they were to be, by seeing that their curricula were designed to give the place to English that would be necessary, and by seeing that they were taught by teachers of whose own qualifications in the subject there could be no doubt.

Not only does this not happen, but even to visualise it happening would involve challenging some of the basic assumptions upon which the country's educational system is based. If one excludes the *Kibbutzim* which jealously maintain an educational system of their own for all up to the age of eighteen—not, by general consent, at a very highly academic level—the basic educational system for the Jewish population of the country is a uniform one. (There are some concessions to the religiously orthodox which need not concern us here.) It consists of compulsory elementary education for eight years (ages six to fourteen) followed by four years secondary education in different types of institutions roughly corresponding to the familiar British divisions at this level. Something like eighty per cent of children do in fact go on to some kind of secondary school. English is taught from the age of eleven in all schools, and is a compulsory subject in the school-leaving examination—roughly corresponding to the

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French *baccalauréat* which is itself the passport for admission to University.

To SEE WHAT this apparently privileged position of English in fact denotes, one must dig a little deeper. In the first place, all streaming in elementary education is ruled out. All children must begin English at eleven, and none may begin it earlier. The child whose parents may talk English, or who may have had other special opportunities, is taught alongside and at the pace of the child who may have serious difficulties even with Hebrew. Furthermore, the dominant educational theory of the country is a child-centred theory of the American type: "happiness" and "good adjustment," rather than specialised knowledge or skills. School hours are short and tasks light. Not much English will be acquired at this stage.

But when one comes to secondary education, the case is not much better. It is true that there is some "streaming" in that only a proportion go to the *lycée*-type or grammar-school-type institution. But even here the possibilities of getting a first-rate grounding in English are not very good either. Not only is four years a very short period for secondary education anywhere, but the Israeli child is expected to cram into it not only a full secular education but a full "Jewish education" as well. While the elementary school child of ability is given too little to do, the secondary school-child is overburdened. Furthermore, "Jewish" education—taken in a national rather than a religious sense—has the disadvantage of being very much detached from other subjects, and of contributing little to their understanding. However nationalistic the teaching of French or English history may be, a French or English child cannot help but pick up some idea of European or even world history from the way in which the fortunes of his own country have been interwoven with wider movements. But the contacts of the Jewish people as an organised community with world history have always been peripheral, almost accidental. The other nations have mainly appeared on the scene as persecutors.[1]

Furthermore, even in the upper grades, teaching must normally be left to teachers who have themselves often learned English only as a foreign language, not even as a *first* foreign language. One thus gets a neglect of diction and pronunciation which are anyhow perhaps particularly difficult for ears used to a semitic language. Whatever the paper accomplishments of the pupils may be, I cannot help feeling that the spoken language is drifting away from its original basis. (Nor, in passing, is the University likely to help with this difficulty, since there "American English" and "South African English" add their quota of aural confusion.)

The problem of English at the secondary-school level has become a subject of public controversy largely because English ranks with mathematics as the subject in the school-leaving examination which produces the highest rate of failures. Since there is a presumption among Jewish parents that all their offspring should be capable of entering a University, this creates some bitterness, and an inevitable pressure for lowering the standards. One demand is that the schools should drop any attempt to teach English literature, and confine themselves to inculcating everyday speech on the lines of commercial language-schools in other countries. Israeli children may need to use English for certain practical purposes (so it is argued) but their cultural needs can be met in their own language. Shakespeare is superfluous. Other educationists argue that to meet this demand would further emphasise the nationalist self-sufficiency of Israeli youth. English for them is not a matter of business or official correspondence but the only link with the European culture to which European Jewry contributed so much (and from which they do not want the Jews of Israel to feel wholly alien). And so in what can only be described as a new "Battle of the Books," parents and teachers clash over whether *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* are suitable set-books for Israeli examinations.

IT IS AT the University level that the most serious difficulties begin. Israel—like many other countries—is bent on large-scale University expansion based upon the view that all who achieve the minimum school-leaving qualification are entitled to a higher education.[2]

Whether the resources being put into University expansion would not be better devoted, at least in part, to upgrading the standard of secondary education is a question important for Israel as well as for other developing

[1] Similarly, in Western Europe, Latin has been regarded both as a training for the mind and as a preparation for the study of modern languages. Latin does not figure in the curriculum of any Israeli school. Instead one has *Talmud*—no doubt as is claimed, an excellent training for the logical faculties, but hardly a help to the learning of English.

[2] In addition to the two old-established institutions, the Haifa *"Technion"* (now developing courses in the social sciences and the humanities along M.I.T. or Cal.Tech. lines) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv has one secular and one religious University of its own as well as branches of some of the Jerusalem faculties. There is further talk of a University at Beersheba to assist in the economic and cultural development of "the South," Israel's American-style "frontier."

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countries. What is clear is that at the University level—except in purely Jewish subjects—a reasonable level of English (or of some other world-language) is essential. It is absurd to expect more than a minute fraction of the world's scientific and learned books and periodical articles to be translated into a language spoken by a bare two million people. On the other hand the number of translations that have been produced, and the fact that the University has adopted the American pattern of "courses" and "course credits" means that the unambitious student can get by with a minimum of English. As the American-trained head of the economics department remarked to me, "At one time there were no economics textbooks in Hebrew. All the students in the department required English. Now three of the staple textbooks have been translated and students are beginning to believe they can scrape through on these alone...." In a University where so many students are only part-time, necessarily devoting much of the day to earning their keep, and where there is an overall "wastage rate" of as high as thirty per cent, it needs a very strong will or some very marked incentive for the student not to be seduced by short cuts of this kind.

It is doubtful if the University has fully taken into account the importance of this factor in relation to its changing social and linguistic intake. It does of course provide courses in the use of English as an auxiliary language; but as elsewhere such courses are regarded as less important than those offered by the "English department" proper which is more concerned with keeping the students in touch with the latest fashions in literary criticism in England and America. Furthermore the time taken up with English diminishes the student's chances of learning French or German as well. It could be argued that the rather large production of English "majors" might go some way to helping the schools in their difficulties. But with the low salaries and low prestige of school-teaching as a profession the hope may be an over-optimistic one.

FOR THOSE FOR WHOM English is to remain simply an auxiliary—for the future active élite of the country—the final hope is a period of study abroad. But even here problems remain. In the first place, a country which almost by definition has a standing balance-of-payments problem is unlikely to encourage many people abroad. In the second place, the weakness in linguistic training before the student comes to Britain or America means that much of his precious two years will be taken up with acquiring a standard of English—"active" as opposed to "passive" English—sufficient for him to take full advantage of the facilities for study now at last available.

One suspects that such problems vary with different branches of learning. In the pure sciences where symbolic language prevails the problems may be fairly easily surmountable. The Weizmann Institute is clearly an integral part of what one could almost call the "scientific international" of our era; and only the different beauties of the site remind one that one is at Rehovoth, Israel, and not at Berkeley, California, or Cambridge, England. But in the humanities or the social sciences an institution such as the Hebrew University which works in a language not used elsewhere must have very special difficulties both in maintaining academic standards and in keeping its students' eyes fixed upon a wider world. It is a sad commentary on our times that the only Israeli institution which *does* demand a high standard of English as a *prerequisite* for entry is—the National Defence College!

Indeed it is no surprise that a country beset with enemies (and with a unique task in nation-building still before it) should find it hard to strike a balance between its need for special skills and social-democratic ideals of equality. I can understand resistance to any ideas of educational selection or streaming where this would in effect amount to separating children according to the countries of origin of their families—a near *apartheid*. But this response is no final answer.

WHETHER OTHER developing countries have solved "second language" problems more successfully is something one would like to know. I find that an ambitious attempt has been made by Turkey, which has created alongside the University of Ankara a new Institution planned on a very grandiose scale—the Middle East Technical University; here not only technical subjects but also the social sciences are actually taught *in English*. I was told by Turks of their hope that this would enable the Institution to attract students from other developing countries —and of its present students about ten per cent are indeed non-Turkish. But Turkey too, is a country where both democratic and nationalistic sentiments run deep. The original arrangement was that a good knowledge of English was a precondition of admission to the M.E.T.U., but its people began to complain that since English was taught only at a minority of good *lycées*, this effectively closed the door of the University to all but the children of the wealthy. So the provision has been abandoned; and the University itself offers a first year devoted to the study of English before ordinary studies are embarked

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upon. It is too early to say how successful this is likely to be. Turkish is as remote from English as is Hebrew—though I suspect (as an amateur) that the phonetic difficulties are rather slighter. But this may well not be the terminal point. And I can visualise political parties in a few years' time insisting that to teach in a foreign language is a mark of "national inferiority," and on converting the University into a purely Turkish institution.

Indeed, when one confronts governments of New States declaring their intention to embark upon programmes of economic growth and of social development, one good touchstone of their seriousness of purpose might, I suggest, be the question: "And what are you doing about the teaching of a world-language—English? French?... Russian?...."

Black Muslims, White Liberals

NEGROES in America have cause to be angry. The delegates from new African states are robed in splendour at the U.N., while uptown in Harlem, ghetto existence continues. American Negroes are told that most people in most other countries live in acute poverty: a nearer fact for them is their relative poverty and neglect in a country which seems to be creating a permanent mudsill of unemployed and underemployed—many of whom are Negro. Nkrumah and Nyerere may have troubles: at least they are heads of state, listened to when they speak. By contrast, the American Negro notes the delays and evasions that have followed the Supreme Court's desegregation ruling of 1954, and which accompany the Senate debate over the current civil rights bill. How can Negroes fail to be cynical at the discrepancy between Senator Fulbright's brave "liberal" words on foreign policy, and his anxiety to placate the white voters of Arkansas on domestic racial policy?

So American Negroes *are* angry. James Baldwin has warned his white countrymen that time is running out. The Black Muslims say that time has run out, for the white man everywhere. Brother Malcolm, late of the Black Muslims, talks of organised violence. White police chiefs and Negro leaders agree that there could well be serious race-riots during the next few months. The situation has a curious tension intermixed with something like tedium. No-one knows what will happen, or quite what ought to happen. There are historical parallels of a sort which suggest that the conditions are "revolutionary." Aspiration and despair go hand in hand. The complaint is not that there are no improvements but that improvement is too slow. Nothing less than a prodigious change in white sentiment and behaviour would apparently suffice; but no Negro really believes this change could take place. Governmental and judicial processes are ineffective. Resistance to reform is too easy in the United States. Congress and the courts seem mild and futile—designed only to obstruct or to recommend, not to implement. Other federal expedients, such as sending military contingents to Little Rock or to Oxford, Mississippi, are too brutally cumbersome. The atmosphere is tedious as well as ominous because all the arguments have been rehearsed before, decade after decade. This is made clear in August Meier's *Negro Thought in America 1880–1915*.[1] Contempt for white culture and pride in ancient Africa were being expressed fifty years ago by the leaders of the Negro Society for Historical Research. Even the shocking novelty of the Black Muslims, with their call for a total repudiation of white Christian civilisation, is only the hoary white racialist argument printed in reverse.

What is new and possibly revolutionary about the Muslim propaganda, and in the writing of more subtle Negroes like James Baldwin, is the tone of menace: the only tone possible if one seeks yet again to restate the Negro case without inducing a yawn in the listeners. The sense of dull stalemate encourages extremes. Without them nothing would have shape; no-one would bother to finish a newspaper story. Now the American journalist can secure attention with the bogeys Elijah Muhammad and Brother Malcolm. The flesh is made to creep. The old dread of Negro insurrection rises again in the national imagination, and the nearer memory of the bloody riots of 1917 or 1943. As for the Negro, he has quite abandoned the ingratiating optimism exemplified by Booker T. Washington, in the era Mr. Meier describes. It is the unsmiling aspects of American life that preoccupy current Negro thought.

As IN OTHER revolutionary situations, the moderates are made to appear foolish and even treacherous. Only opposites can recognise and to a degree respect one another. White Citizens' Councils and Black Muslims exhibit similar features, and are perhaps necessary to one another. In between, the men of goodwill shift uneasily. Those Negroes—Ralph Bunche, Carl Rowan, John Hope Franklin—who have

[1] University of Michigan Press, 1963, $7.50.

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achieved prominence in American public affairs now run the risk of being regarded by other Negroes as hostages held by the whites, or—worse—as Uncle Toms lavishly rewarded for their acquiescence in white stratagems. As for the white liberals, they have come in lately for a good deal of unfair abuse. Negro militants lump them with the rest of the white world—full of condescension, and what the Muslims call "tricknology." Whatever the liberal says is taken in the wrong way. He is forced by the dictates of democratic liberalism into overpraising Negro writers or artists, or into explaining to his children and others that there is "essentially" no difference between one person and the next. Essentially he is right. But society from day to day does not operate essentially; it is interested in small but crucial differences, such as the shape of nose and colour of hair that make us decide one woman is beautiful and her companion not. The liberal is compelled into these well-meant assertions; the Negro American thinks him blandly stupid in consequence, or discovers complicated insults in every phrase of the embarrassed discourse.

The vital point is overlooked: namely, that the white liberal is after all, or wants to be, on the side of the Negro. Millions of young white Americans, and their mentors in schools and colleges, are either actively interested in Negro betterment, or else healthily indifferent to the whole poisoned record. They have no particular desire to exclude anybody from anything. The federal courts are liberal to the point of radicalism. Some radicals indeed even envy the Negro his compulsory alienation, his fancied recklessness. Jack Kerouac and Norman Mailer are such people. Is their admiration really so offensive? In the very public accounts of their private meetings, one gets the feeling that it is James Baldwin who is tempted to use the weapon of exclusion against Mailer, rather than the other way round. Academic liberalism is still more at a discount. If revolutions are always unfair, this potential revolution is certainly unfair to the American scholar of recent years. Possibly he is a little unfair to the whites in his scrupulous determination to explore the infamies of past behaviour. This could be said, for instance, of Kenneth M. Stampp's splendid account of American Negro slavery, *The Peculiar Institution*, which appeared in the United States in 1956 and has now been enterprisingly made available by a British publisher.[2] Far from suggesting the brighter aspects of the institution, as his predecessors tended to do, Stampp implies that it had no bright aspects —at least not for the Negro—but was on the contrary sordid, cruel, commercial, and degrading for master and slave alike. The record is somewhat redressed but basically confirmed in another brilliant study, Stanley Elkins' *Slavery, A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (1959). Elkins argues that slavery in the United States was in fact worse than in other countries, including Brazil where it lasted longer; the American Negro was deprived of all identity, all human dignity. Like some prisoners in Nazi concentration-camps, the American slave often responded by becoming childlike, submissive and lacking in volition. Hence the emergence of the stereotype of the merry comical Negro; though never as common as Southern whites liked to believe, he did exist. Here and there, Ole Massa *was* faithfully tended by his lobotomised Caesar or Pompey.

A GENERATION AGO Stampp and Elkins would have met a hostile reception. Do their findings now come too late? Will there be an explosion of violence this summer in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Birmingham? Will the Negro ever be fully, unselfconsciously accepted as merely another American? The answers, I think, must be somewhat pessimistic, in that the millennium will not arrive and that bloodshed may. But there has been bloodshed before, and millennia never do arrive. Elkins' concentration-camp analogy offers a clue. The Negro personality was disabled in America. His dilemma was that he had nothing to model himself upon except the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) society to which he conspicuously did not belong. No amount of hair-straightener or skin-bleach could do the trick. He hated himself more than he hated the whites. Now, possibly and hopefully, this is changing. The Negro has begun to recover his identity, or to invent one. He has a new *élan*. He probably does not think the Black Muslims have a practical programme, least of all when they lay claim to a separate Negro republic to be carved out of American territory. Nevertheless, he cannot but respond to the exhilarating truculence of the Muslim creed, which provides him with a legendary past and a visionary future. More immediately, he seeks to organise in ways which will make his weight felt. In this respect he resembles the American labour unionists of the 1930s. Now, as then, the administration is sympathetic (the courts rather more so), but Congress slow-moving and society as a whole inimical or apathetic. So the militant Negro, like the labour organiser, experiments with the techniques open to him. Appreciating the collective weight of numbers, he uses the same devices of the picket, the sit-in, the boycott. To rouse his followers

[2] *The Peculiar Institution: Negro Slavery in the American South* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 35s.).

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and scare his opponents—though without cynicism, for he is an angry man—the Negro makes extreme demands in passionate language. Like the unionists he is ready to risk violence and quite likely to meet it. With luck the outcome may likewise be comparable: a whole shift of emphasis by a society, which learns to live with what it once abhorred and quite soon will no longer remember clearly what the fuss was about. If that is too rosy a prospect for Negroes in America, since their problem is much more complicated, at any rate the chances are that with some encouraging kicks good sense may at long last score a partial yet permanent victory over bloodymindedness.

Marcus Cunliffe

Max Frisch's "Andorra"

IN "ANDORRA," which was first performed in Zürich three years ago—and was recently performed in London in both English (by Laurence Olivier's National Theatre) and German (by the Berlin Schiller Theater)—the Swiss dramatist Max Frisch has written a supremely important play, one of the most important to be written in the German language since 1945. It is so important that even if its dramatic and intellectual structure were shakier than in fact it is, even if it laid itself open to still more bizarre misinterpretations, it deserves to be performed on every important stage in the West.

The preliminary outline of the play* is contained in Frisch's *Tagebuch 1946–1949* (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1950) under the title "The Andorran Jew," and begins as follows: "There lived in Andorra a young man who was taken for a Jew. The task would be to tell the supposed story of his origin, his daily contacts with the Andorrans, who saw in him the Jew—the ready-made image that was waiting for him everywhere. . . ." And towards the end of this sketch, which is some fifty lines long, Frisch writes among other things: "Until one day facts emerged which the dead man couldn't have known: he was a foundling, whose parents were later traced, an Andorran like the rest of us. . . . But every time they looked in the mirror the Andorrans saw to their horror that they themselves bore the features of Judas, each one of them."

Both dramatically and intellectually, this promised to be shatteringly effective, and in its original form it might have been so. In the shape in which it has now appeared on the stage it is not. Andri, the young man, is now shown to us as the foster-son of an Andorran teacher who claims to have rescued him at a tender age from the persecution of the Jews in the neighbouring country of the *"Schwarzen,"* the "Blacks." At first, the Andorrans loved the charming little fellow and admired the teacher for his gallant deed. Gradually, however, they see in Andri nothing but the Jew and in his foster-father nothing but the bad patriot who has thrust this foreign body into their midst. When the teacher finally comes out with the confession that Andri is his illegitimate son by a woman from the neighbouring country, they are no longer prepared to believe him. To them he is a Jew and that's that. So he is to himself; he takes upon himself the compulsion to be a Jew, and when the "Blacks" occupy Andorra he is dragged away and killed.

This, too, with all its detrimental deviations from the original conception, might have yielded a highly effective and convincing play. What Frisch has made out of it is a didactic piece in which the characters point different aspects of the moral and which is saved from tedium only by the inherent explosiveness of its theme.

In the 'forties Charlie Chaplin became all too conscious of having a message, began to make films full of symbolic significance and rarely and almost unwillingly allowed flashes of his comic genius to appear—as though he were ashamed of it, as though he considered it unworthy of a man with a message to employ comedy. Similarly (and perhaps for similar reasons) Max Frisch throws away his brilliant idea of the Andorran Jew, renounces a dramatic shock in favour of an ideological one, although it is only through the former that the latter can gain its full emphasis. He evidently wishes to avoid the suspicion of striving after an effect. He places the discovery that Andri is not a Jew—which in the course of the action would have come as an unparalleled dramatic explosion—at the end of the first scene, taking it with painful purposefulness out of its organic context and giving it to a figure who comes forward to the footlights and addresses the audience direct.

* Some excerpts from *Andorra* were published in the July 1962 ENCOUNTER. It has been published in full, together with *The Fire-Raisers* and *Count Oederland*, in the translation by Michael Bullock: *Three Plays* (Methuen).

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This could have been done equally well by another figure and equally well at another point in the play. What happens is *interchangeable*. And nothing ought to be interchangeable in a play like this, nothing. (Nor in any other, if it is to be a good play. Nor in any kind of work of art.)

Is it a surface phenomenon, or is there a deeper reason why everything about this play that strikes a false note can be reduced to the common denominator of interchangeability? From "Andorra" to the central point and problem, to the supposed Jew Andri, whom Frisch wishes to be understood not as a Jew but—like Andorra—as a "model"? "To-day or to-morrow," we are authoritatively told in the original programme note, "for 'Jew' we may read Communist, or capitalist, or yellow or white or black; it all depends...."

Here, unless all appearances are deceptive, lies the root of the play's fundamental misunderstanding. The terms Jew, Jewishness, Jewry may be ambiguous as concepts and facts. One may not be able to say what they *are*. But one can say very definitely what they are not: they are not models, they are not interchangeable objects of any haphazard (and likewise interchangeable) prejudices, just as anti-Semitism is not a haphazard (and likewise interchangeable) prejudice. Neither the Jews nor the anti-Semites make things as easy as that. Matters are not so simple, so unmysterious, so shallow and physical here. They go a little beyond this, into the metaphysical, in so far as the expression may be used in connexion with Max Frisch. In the last analysis—and this idea ought not to be entirely dismissed, even if one adopts an attitude of benevolent neutrality *zum lieben Gott*—in the last analysis the Jewish problem has something to do with religion.

I do not wish to force my point of view upon Frisch, whom I greatly respect in spite of all differences of opinion. But I should like him to know of the existence of such a point of view and to take account of it when he tackles such a sadly acute problem. I do not wish—at the risk of having this attitude attributed to my own self-pity—to have lived through and survived the murder of six million of my fellows in order to hear one non-Jew (Andri) say to another non-Jew (the priest): "You are a Christian by profession and I am a Jew by birth. One feels a thing like that." Or: "Hundreds of thousands of my forebears have died at the stake, their fate is my fate." Or, finally: "You don't understand that, because you are not a Jew." A character who by this time everyone on the stage (including himself) and everyone in the audience already *knows* is not a Jew, should not be given things like that to say. If he does he debases them to catch-phrases, to empty words behind which there is no reality (or an interchangeable reality). If he does, it sounds inescapably ironic and almost like a mockery of those who can, and perhaps *must*, say it—because that is the only way in which they can console themselves for the martyrdom of their hundreds of thousands of forebears and their millions of contemporaries, because that is the only way in which they can find any sense in their destiny. There *are* things which one cannot understand if one is not a Jew. Or which one understands differently. Not "better," but differently. And I do not wish to have my right to this other way of understanding things contested, not even with the best intentions.

Now Andri might conceivably still have been converted to Jewry *out of conviction*, might have taken the Jewish destiny upon himself *in the knowledge of what it is*, and knowing what he was doing. But he doesn't know and nobody tells him, not even the (wretchedly misdrawn) priest, who ought to know and tell him—and instead contents himself with extracting a (so to speak) positive aspect from the bad Jewish characteristics attributed to Andri by the Andorrans (for example: "Don't worry about not having any feelings, to make up for it you are intelligent..."). It never occurs to Andri—that is to say, Frisch doesn't let it occur to him—that to be Jewish may mean something else than being money-grabbing, underhanded, cowardly, incapable of physical prowess, and similar unpleasant characteristics. He accepts the supposed fact of his Jewishness as something entirely negative, and after the mistake has been revealed he goes on clinging to it as something entirely negative. You have been telling me for so long what a no-good fellow (*mieser Kerl*) I am that in the end I have really turned into a Jew. And now I'm going to remain one....

In reality, however—here the boomerang returns to the hand that hurled it with the best intentions—in reality Andri has not assumed at all the bad characteristics to which he confesses. In reality, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, he is as open-hearted, as feeling, as courageous, as good a carpenter and footballer and, in short, as sympathetic a character as one could wish or imagine any young Andorran. And this means the total collapse of the intended proof. For if the situation were to prove anything, we should now have to discover that Andri really is a Jew. But in fact he turns out to be an Andorran. From this point on nothing in the play works properly. It never becomes

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clear why the teacher, when he refuses Andri his daughter's hand, does not tell him the truth, but leaves him in the anguished belief that he is being rejected because he is a Jew. It never becomes clear why Barblin, in spite of her love for Andri, goes to bed with the repulsive soldier, why Andri's real mother suddenly comes on a visit from the country of the "Blacks" and why she doesn't tell him the truth either.

Moreover—and this is more serious than all these defects which, at a pinch, could have been rectified—there is not a single decent person in the whole play. Even Andri could claim to be so only if his decision to remain a Jew were made of his own free will; but by the time he makes it he has no choice, nobody would any longer believe that he was not a Jew. Equally the teacher, who made him a Jew, was not concerned with any moral experiment, such as laying bare Andorran hypocrisy; he was concerned with hypocritically saving his own good name; indeed, if we look at the matter closely, he has most shabbily misused his compatriots' rudimentary humanitarian impulses. And these compatriots themselves are revealed as a collection of such shameless, sanctimonious opportunists that one is almost tempted to welcome their enslavement by the neighbouring Black state, almost inclined to doubt the feasibility of any resistance. Admittedly, Andorra is everywhere. But is it really everywhere so putrified, so ready for its decline and fall, so much at the mercy of attack from the dictatorship next door, whether it be black or any other colour?

THIS IS A rather roundabout way of coming to the conclusion and back to the starting point, by indicating that it must be a very remarkable play which raises such questions. *Andorra* is one of the most powerful challenges that has gone out from the German stage for many a long year. And it could never be this if there were not a whole man and a whole outlook behind it. One need not necessarily be in agreement with this outlook and the way in which the author expresses it—but this is his way of expressing it, and the equipment which he brings to the task, in spite of a few flaws, is of the very best. Max Frisch possesses a mercilessly sceptical insight into the dubious aspects of human nature and the breaking points in the structures of our society. On the basis of this insight, and supported by a power of statement that is often uncannily pregnant with meaning, he has written a supremely important play. It is good to know that it has been performed on almost every stage in Germany.

Friedrich Torberg

Letter from Salzburg

Baroque & Roll

THIS IS Mozart's birth-place, but there was precious little 18th-century clarity or serenity to the fourth annual jury meetings for the Formentor Literary Prize which had again brought together some forty critics and writers from thirteen countries. Before this year's ten-thousand-dollar award was finally announced, there were titanic conflicts and dark intrigues more characteristic of Wagner to the north and Verdi to the south than of this quiet little Mozartean museum.

The literary debate was opened in the baroque hall of the Schloss Mirabelle by the so-called British delegation who, in one swift characteristic blow, promptly sank the leading English candidate, Mr. William Golding. It was magnificent, but it wasn't war. It was modest, honest, self-effacing, but it had nothing to do with the literary politics for which every other armed camp was busily preparing. The not unknown author of *Lord of the Flies* had just produced a new novel, *The Spire*, and there was every reason for an English writer to be a favourite in the running this year. But the British delegation is an admirably cosmopolitan group which also represents the Dutch and the Canadians, includes two Americans, and this year offered a home to an Austrian who for political reasons could not possibly join the Germans. It was led by Miss Mary McCarthy who, as in her sharp-witted novels (*The Oasis*, *The Group*), usually proceeds passionately to destroy the things she loves. So it was that very little was heard in the cause of English letters. A Paris critic made a valiant effort on behalf of Golding's *Spire*, and a German professor even added a consoling word about Miss Muriel Spark. But it was all literally "beyond the fringe" when Mr. Jonathan Miller (the gangling cabaret star of the show of the same name), trying to put in a good word for the brilliant West Indian writer, V. S. Naipaul, skidded on the marble floor and found himself noiselessly addressing a dead microphone. It was no accident; it all had a deeper meaning.

SALZBURG WAS NOW READY for a massive national-minded attack, and when the eloquent French voices finished the presentation for Mme Nathalie Sarraute she was clearly the front-runner. Mme Sarraute's latest book, *Les Fruits d'Or* ("The Golden Fruits"), is, with that unfailing Paris touch for chic and fashion, a novel about a novel which is competing for a prize and is wildly praised and meanly destroyed by a ruthless band of literary critics. Life just could

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not resist imitating art. Miss McCarthy thought the book to be already "a Classic," but Mr. Herbert Gold saltily doubted whether it could ever be "read for a second time." It was thereupon pronounced to be "a masterpiece" (Alberto Moravia), "a joke," "a disaster," and "a bore" (John Weightman). When the Indian vice-president of the meeting, the red-turbanned Sikh Kushwant Singh, protested that he could not even read the book "for the first time" and threatened to turn his back on "the whole of decadent European literature," the tide seemed to be about to turn, but some said in favour and some said against.

Italians, Swedes, Spaniards, and Germans rallied to their favourites. Oratory resounded in the gilt-edged hall of the Schloss Mirabelle. Some called it "franglais," others "frenglish," but it sounded like praise for the Cuban Alejo Carpentier, for the Japanese Yukio Mishima, and for that volcanic German talent Günter Grass, whose supporters seemed untroubled by the prospect of a German clean sweep. The day before, thirteen publishers, also meeting here to award another ten-thousand-dollar Formentor prize to a young writer for a first novel, chose Gisela Elsner, a 25-year-old Berliner, for her grotesquerie *Die Riesenzwerge* ("The Giant Dwarfs"). Frau Elsner's story is seen through the eyes of a wicked child caught up in a sex-crazed family. Herr Grass' new tale, *Dog's Days*, is about a wild beast lost in Hitler's ruins. "Oh, it is good," a local Salzburg patriot whispered to me, "that Mozart is not living at this hour...." And the mood of the meeting, in fact, turned away from heavy Teutonic symbolism to other things.

By the time the first ballots were passed out among the polyglot jurymen, one or two clear lines had been drawn, several factions (and even fractions) had emerged, and the halls of the Schloss echoed with passions and confusions. The French, of course, led the support for Nathalie Sarraute, but less (one had the impression) out of literary conviction than Gallic loyalty. The Americans, under the influence as they often are of an "old Orient hand" (in this case, Professor Donald Keene from Tokyo), argued for the Japanese candidate, Mishima. The Germans, torn between East and West, divided their enthusiasm between the French candidate and a Polish *avant-garde* writer, Gombrowicz. The British delegation, in a surprising burst of social-seriousness, came out strongly in favour of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Russian who had just been passed over by the Soviets for the "Lenin Prize," and Miss McCarthy switched all her eloquence on behalf of the Tolstoyan talents of the author of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *Matryona's Home*. The Italians and the Spaniards disagreed among themselves and seemed to be watching each other furtively in some internecine Latin rivalry.

Then the "battle of the books" began in earnest, with no holds barred and all weapons out in the open. The German Marxist, Hans Mayer, delicately suggested that Gombrowicz was "something of a fascist," and a bomb exploded. A Scandinavian critic, haunted by the Nobel Prize quarrel over Boris Pasternak, direly warned against "the awful consequences" of giving another prize to a Russian over the heads of the Soviet authorities, and suddenly the cold war had broken out. Worse than that, even the Sino-Soviet conflict was involved—for, as one Spanish Marxist reasoned, wasn't the Italian Marxist sympathy for Solzhenitsyn just another sly ideological dig at the Chinese? Small wonder, then, that on the penultimate ballot the Japanese led all the rest: at least peace and a far-away tranquillity seemed to be there.

But it was not to be: the laws of literary politics allow for no escape. The British delegation (with its Americans and Dutchmen and Austrian) held fast to Solzhenitsyn. The U.S. delegation would not desert Mishima. But the Italians, upset by the deviousness of their Spanish friends (who were now pro-Japanese), abandoned the Russian in favour of Nathalie Sarraute—only to find that the Spanish had switched too. Mme Sarraute now had a clear majority, if for the most unclear of reasons.

At the end there was only a light burst of applause, for even among Nathalie Sarraute's friends there was a very special faint-heartedness. How would this severe, uncompromising, no-nonsense *avant-gardiste* take to the idea of being awarded a great prize? Would she understand, accept, forgive? Why should this malicious trick be done to her?

But this, after all, is the unique quality of high, black humour which is by now part of the Formentor tradition. Borges, who won the first prize, thinks of books as a kind of metaphysical decoration in an otherworldly library. Uwe Johnson, who won the second prize, took his big cheque and denounced the jurymen for their free ways with money. Gadda, who was last year's prizewinner, spent half a lifetime devising a new dialect which even his Italian countrymen could not read. And now the prize goes to a book about a book whose imaginary virtues hypnotise the *literati*.

I don't know whether Mozart would have understood, but Figaro, Leporello, or Papageno might well have been delighted.

M. J. L.

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Koestler's Act of Creation

Vision, Theory, Romance — By STEPHEN TOULMIN

THIS IS A BAD TIME for polymaths. The old jibe about a Jack-of-all-trades being master of none has bitten deep into our minds, so that few people will admit to an intellectual grasp of anything more than a narrow range of experience. In a fragmented culture, everybody is *expected* to be a specialist: so men cling to the professional standards of their guilds as the lifebelts which will keep them afloat on a sea of general ideas which they have lost the capacity either to swim in, or to plumb. By now, a politician who habitually quoted Horace in Parliament would be endangering his position as an M.P.—and what matters more, it would be the same if he had a reputation for habitually quoting (say) T. S. Eliot. Natural scientists, again, look with suspicion at those colleagues who stray too far outside their specialisms, and for the most part they shut their eyes to the very existence of philosophy. In return, the philosophers have made their craft a "profession" of its own: a professional philosopher no longer needs to understand even the broadest ideas of contemporary natural science—to say nothing of its factual discoveries.

To use a phrase of Pascal's, ours is an age dominated by the *esprit géometrique*. Narrow precision and deductive exactitude carry the palms: analogies are distrusted, virtuosity suspect. So to embark on any large synthesis of the different sciences—still more, to range with confidence through both the sciences and the humanities—a man must have both a level head and a well-stocked mind. His *esprit géometrique* must be counterbalanced by a well-developed *esprit de finesse*, and his personal position must be so well assured that he need no longer be afraid of making mistakes.

Who among our contemporaries dares measure himself up against this specification? One man, at any rate, has had the courage—or the foolhardiness—to do so: Mr. Arthur Koestler, whose remarkable new book *The Act of Creation* is an attempt to integrate into a single system of ideas the results of modern physiology, psychological theory and his own novel analysis of artistic creativity and scientific discovery.

HOW IS ONE TO appraise a book of this kind? Some readers will be tempted to burke the issue by retorting, "Who is Arthur Koestler to write such a book, anyway?" (This will be especially tempting for the theoretical psychologists—such as Skinner of Harvard—on whom Koestler is most severe.) Yet this would be scarcely fair; for who, we might reply in return, is *better* qualified than Koestler to cover the whole of his chosen field? To the general reader, no doubt, *Darkness at Noon* is "typical" Koestler, and *The Sleepwalkers* was a curious sideline—the propagandist storyteller being distracted by curiosity into the world of scholarship. Yet, although Koestler won his major reputation as a political novelist and has since become widely known as a public figure, his initial training was in fact scientific, and he started his career as science correspondent for the Ullstein newspapers in Berlin.

Indeed, one might try looking at Koestler's overall achievement in the opposite perspective: for perhaps it will appear in retrospect that the curious, anomalous phase in his career was that when he was writing novels, instead of exercising his true concerns as a "natural

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Koestler's The Act of Creation *has just been published in London by Hutchinson (42s.) and will appear in New York this autumn (Macmillan, $8).*

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philosopher." Certainly, many of those who know him personally will feel that *The Act of Creation* gives a truer picture of his actual cast of mind than the nightmare-obsessed plots of his earlier stories. At last the shadow of the Stalin-Hitler Era can be forgotten, the menace of the Cold War is lifting, and Koestler can turn his ample, serious mind away from the tortuousness of political conspiracy, to view with all-embracing scope the larger sphere of Man and Nature. Scientific and philosophical reflections which he sketched fifteen years ago in the book *Insight and Outlook,* and which he focused through the lens of Johann Kepler's personality in *The Sleepwalkers,* are expounded at length for the first time in the 750 pages of his new book. Throughout the whole close-textured volume, there is not a single reference to communism, Karl Marx is alluded to only once, *à propos* of Darwin, and there is one passing reference alone to the Spanish Civil War; for here, without the slightest ambiguity, Arthur Koestler is staking his claim to be regarded *as a scientist.* Whatever one's final verdict on his conclusions, it is at any rate essential to look at his argument carefully and seriously.

THE ACT OF CREATION is scarcely the kind of book one can summarise. At best a critic can describe and paraphrase its argument in general terms, before attempting to assess its points of strength and weakness. To begin with, then, Koestler's exposition is divided into two halves, which could—echoing Parmenides—be labelled "the way down" and "the way up." The first half of the book ("The Art of Discovery and the Discoveries of Art") presents a general theory about the nature of creative originality as displayed in humour, natural science, and the fine arts. The second half ("Habit and Originality") argues that this creativity has analogies on all levels of an organic hierarchy which extends from the sub-cellular world of molecular genetics, up through the spheres of embryology and physiology to those of human behaviour, learning, and symbolic expression. The first half of the book is not (as one might guess) a popular presentation of the same theories which the second half expounds in more technical language: the two parts are strictly complementary, and both are equally necessary for an understanding of Koestler's whole thesis.

This thesis is a threefold one. Koestler hopes to demonstrate, in the first place, that "organic life, in all its manifestations, from morphogenesis to symbolic thought, is governed by 'rules of the game' which lend it coherence, order, and unity-in-variety"; secondly, that "these rules ... whether innate or acquired, are represented in coded form on various levels, from the chromosomes to the structures in the nervous system responsible for symbolic thought"; and finally, that all creative originality is the product of what he calls "bisociation," which involves "the combination, reshuffling and re-structuring of skills" or other rule-governed activities. Artistic and intellectual novelties all spring from the fusion—indeed from the *marriage*—of separate pre-existing routines: in a manner of speaking, then, "the basic model of the creative act" is "the bisociation of two genetic codes" in sexual reproduction, since this too is the ultimate source of novelty on the organic level.

LET US BEGIN BY looking at Koestler's initial claim, to identify a common pattern of originative activity shared by the jester, the sage (or scientist), and the artist; then go on to consider the "organic hierarchy" which he sees as underlying all kinds of creative activity; and finally ask whether he is justified in equating the end-points of his two investigations—human creativity, on the one hand, and top-level organic activity, on the other.

For much of the first half of the book, Koestler's *esprit de finesse* is at its best. What he does here is to set out for us a *theory* about the major originative activities of the human mind; and he shows us the force of this new view by a subtle presentation of selected examples which gradually insinuate his key-idea into our minds. This idea is a *theoretical* one, in a quite strict sense of that term. When giving a completely general account of *motion,* for example, physicists start by presenting a simplified "ideal type" of the phenomenon in question, from which all the complicating factors (*i.e.,* "forces") have been eliminated by a deliberate abstraction. Such "inertial motion" need never in fact take place. We are presented with the model solely as an object of intellectual comparison, and all the motions that we actually observe are explained as deviations from this ideal, brought about by different permutations and combinations of physical forces.

Koestler's procedure is similar. He, too, treats scientific and artistic originality as difficult and complex phenomena, which are best explained, not by looking at them directly, but rather by comparing them with a simpler, idealised example from which complexities have been eliminated. This simplified example he finds in the activity of the *jester*: as he explains on making the transition "from humour to discovery. . . ."

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> I have started this inquiry with an analysis of humour because it is the only domain of creative activity where a complex pattern of intellectual stimulation elicits a sharply defined response in the nature of a physiological reflex.

What the scientist and the artist do to us in subtle, delicate and varied ways, the jester does to us abruptly; yet for all the apparent simplicity of his achievement it already carries within itself the leading characteristics of its more adult counterparts—

> *Originality* or unexpectedness; *emphasis* through selection, exaggeration and simplification; and economy or *implicitness* which calls for extrapolation, interpolation and transposition.

Above all, the originality of the humorist displays in simplified form a pattern which Koestler is going to trace out for us in all other spheres of human and organic activity:

> The pattern underlying all varieties of humour is "bisociative"—perceiving a situation or event in two habitually incompatible associative contexts. This causes an abrupt transfer of the train of thought from one matrix to another governed by a different logic or "rule of the game." But certain emotions, owing to their greater inertia and persistence, cannot follow such nimble jumps of thought; discarded by reason, they are worked off along channels of least resistance in laughter.[1]

Notoriously, theories of humour tend to be dreary reading. Fortunately, Koestler has a much better sense of humour than (say) Freud, whose account in some respects anticipated his own, so we are spared almost entirely the embarrassing feeling that somehow or other —in the course of being "explained"—the whole point of the jokes under discussion has quietly evaporated. If this is so, it is because Koestler does more than merely identify the *locus* of a joke as the intersection of two "planes." He also analyses with great sensitivity the emotional mechanisms by which this kind of juxtaposition produces its effect on us, relating them back by stages to the laughter of the infant in the cradle, who responds to a mock attack with the same laughter that actual tickling would provoke.

WITH THIS PREAMBLE behind us, we read on eagerly, to see how Koestler will apply the concept of "bisociation" in the more contentious areas of science and the arts. The closing words of the initial section provide a text for what follows—

> Habits are the indispensable core of stability and ordered behaviour; they also have a tendency to become mechanised and to reduce man to the status of a conditioned automaton. The creative act, by connecting previously unrelated dimensions of experience, enables him to attain to a higher level of mental evolution. It is an act of liberation—the defeat of habit by originality.

High-grade intellectual and artistic activities, he argues, display the same contrast between "automatised routines" and moments of "creative originality," prompted by the sudden working-together of "previously unrelated dimensions of experience"; and, in his account of the evolution of scientific ideas, he applies this fundamental contrast convincingly and illuminatingly. For, indeed, the development of science has been characterised by just such an alternation between periods of calm, straightforward growth—during which the adequacy of the fundamental concepts and techniques was not seriously in question—separated by briefer phases of intellectual metamorphosis, during which those fundamental concepts or techniques had to be re-thought entirely. And each such transformation has been preceded by a period of frustration, during which scientists were psychologically "blocked," and hunted around in vain for a way of escape from apparently insoluble difficulties.

In this section, one is especially grateful for the delicacy and clarity with which Koestler describes the actual process of intellectual discovery—in a word, for his *finesse*: this is shown, for instance, in his thumbnail sketches of Gutenberg's invention of movable type, Kepler's speculations about gravity, and Darwin's discovery of "natural selection." By reconstructing the intellectual situations confronting these great innovators, he is able in the end to lend great plausibility to a claim that one might otherwise have resisted—namely, that there is, psychologically speaking, an unbroken spectrum which stretches from the sublimity of a Kepler

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[1] What are these "matrices," which the jester "bisociates"? Here is Koestler's general account of them:

> "The term 'matrix' was introduced to refer to any skill or ability, to any pattern of activity governed by a set of rules—its 'code.' All ordered behaviour, from embryonic development to verbal thinking, is controlled by 'rules of the game,' which lend it coherence and stability, but leave it sufficient degrees of freedom for flexible strategies adapted to environmental conditions. The ambiguity of the term 'code' ('code of laws'—'coded message') is deliberate, and reflects a characteristic property of the nervous system: to control all bodily activities by means of coded signals. . . ."

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or a Newton mastering the movement of the planets, right the way down to Köhler's chimpanzees laying siege to a banana. At both ends of the scale, as Koestler demonstrates, "discovery" comes about when techniques earlier developed quite separately are, for the first time, combined together to surmount a new obstacle; and the same patterns of frustration (or "blocking"), withdrawal into the imagination, hunting around and sudden insight can be observed equally in the ape and in the mathematician.

If science strikes the contemporary literary mind as essentially boring, that is because the crucial importance of imagination and insight in scientific discovery has too often been played down. Somehow, the routine phases of scientific consolidation have come to be regarded as more respectable and "rational." Yet, as Koestler insists,

> the aesthetic satisfaction derived from an elegant mathematical demonstration, a cosmological theory, a map of the human brain, or an ingenious chess problem, may equal that of any artistic experience—given a certain connoisseurship. . . .
>
> To derive pleasure from the art of discovery, as from the other arts, the consumer—in this case the student—must be made to re-live, to some extent, the creative process. In other words, he must be induced, with proper aid and guidance, to make some of the fundamental discoveries of science by himself, to experience in his own mind some of those flashes of insight which have lightened its path. This means that the history of science ought to be made an essential part of the curriculum, that science should be represented in its evolutionary context—and not as a Minerva born fully armed. It further means that the paradoxes, the "blocked matrices" which confronted Archimedes, Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Harvey, Darwin, Einstein should be reconstructed in their historical setting and presented in the form of riddles—with appropriate hints—to eager young minds. . . .
>
> The creative achievements of the scientist lack the "audience appeal" of the artist's for several *reasons briefly mentioned—technical jargon, antiquated* teaching methods, cultural prejudice. The boredom created by these factors has accentuated the artificial frontiers between continuous domains of creativity.

Koestler's own picture of scientific discovery is not just more engaging or "human" than usual—for we all know those terrible coy anecdotes thrown in, like currants, to give flavour to stodgy books about "the great scientists"—but, rather, more gripping and compelling, proving in action his claim that we can all relive the intellectual quandaries of our forefathers. Yet in one respect his theory is, in my

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opinion, open to serious question. I am not referring to his errors of historical fact and interpretation: some of these are inevitable in a book of such length, and they scarcely touch Koestler's central thesis.[2] What I do query is the importance he attaches to the moments of insight being brief and sudden: he speaks repeatedly of "*flashes* of insight," "the bisociative *click*," and so on. Now, there is no doubt that discoveries have sometimes happened as a result of sudden—even instantaneous—inspirations, so that Henri Poincaré (for instance) could actually time the moment at which he realised that the Fuchsian functions that he had been studying mathematically were identical with those of non-Euclidean geometry to the instant at which he put his foot on the step of an omnibus at Coutances. Equally, some scientific discoveries have been born from reverie as surely as Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*—*e.g.*, Kekulé's theory of molecular rings. But surely to treat this kind of discovery as the typical case, rather than an exceptional one, is to make one's account of scientific discovery over-histrionic. It is, no doubt, a matter of great significance in that the central novelty in a new theory *can* suggest itself to the scientist as a result of a momentary association of ideas; but more generally discovery is what Koestler would call a "diluted Eureka process," and for him to insist on the suddenness of scientific inspiration makes one fear that for once he is allowing the novelist in him to get the better of the psychologist. After all, as he concedes, flashes of inspiration may be deceptive, and the all-embracing term "discovery" can scarcely be used with accuracy to refer to anything shorter than the whole establishment of a new concept. Ideas may come to us in a flash: discoveries must be earned laboriously.

When this amendment has been made, we can discount very largely the element of literary exaggeration to be found in such a passage as this:

> Yet the evidence for large chunks of irrationality embedded in the creative process, not only in art (where we are ready to accept it) but in the exact sciences as well, cannot be disputed; and it is particularly conspicuous in the most rational of all sciences: mathematics and mathematical physics . . . a branch of knowledge which operates predominantly with abstract symbols, whose entire rationale and credo are objectivity, verifiability, logicality, turns out to be dependent on mental processes which are subjective, irrational, and verifiable only after the event.

Over the question where we get new ideas from, questions about "logicality" and the rest scarcely arise. We may come by them suddenly, we may work our way to them painfully: it is the total process of discovery—verification after the event and all—which has to be judged by the canons of rationality. Koestler's false antithesis between irrational, inspirational discovery and rational, routine consolidation—God-given originality and earthbound habit—is thus a romantic exaggeration, rather than a piece of serious psychology.

SO WE MOVE ON to the fine arts. Here again, Koestler's sensitivity and range of experience are most rewarding. In many cases, he is able to demonstrate in the field of the arts, also, patterns of creation and originality analogous to those he expounded in his analyses of humour and scientific discovery. The resemblances remain striking, for just so long as he takes care to talk about genuine "originality" in the fine arts—as contrasted with "creativity," in a more general sense. He demonstrates very justly that the same kind of "evolution of ideas" that can be traced out in the history of science can be recognised equally in the history of art:

> In both fields the truly original geniuses are rare compared with the enormous number of talented practitioners; the former acting as spearheads, opening up new territories, which the

[2] For the sake of improving the inevitable second edition, let me just note the following: (1) the author of *L'Homme Machine* (p. 48) was Julien de la Mettrie (1709–51); (2) the second law of thermodynamics antedated Maxwell (p. 128); (3) Anaximander and Lucretius did *not* believe in the evolutionary development of one species into another (pp. 131, 137); (4) Darwin had almost certainly hit on the idea of "natural selection" *before* reading Malthus (p. 140); (5) it was not generally believed by "the educated classes" in the 15th century A.D. that the earth "was a flat disc, of a rectangle perhaps" (p. 227, but cf. p. 255); (6) Newton was explicitly aware that light has wave-like characteristics as well as corpuscular ones (p. 240); (7) the status of Wöhler's synthesis of urea is nowadays in serious doubt (p. 240); and (8) the man who jumped into the crater of Etna to gain immortality was not Eudoxus of Cnidus but Empedokles of Akragas (p. 256).

Note also: the same quotation is attributed to Galton on p. 160 and to Taine on p. 165; T. H. Huxley is credited with a remark of Herbert Spencer's on p. 214; George Sarton is called Henry on p. 224; Miletus is called "Milos" on p. 227; and Hipparchus is misspelt "Hypparchus" on p. 234. Likewise on p. 588, for "Ecclesiastes" read "Epicurus."

I shall return later to the question why Koestler is unable to extend to Aristotle the intellectual charity he insists on in the case of all other scientists—*cf.* the remarks about Aristotle's "absurd theory of physics" which "paid no attention to quantity or measurement" and was "full of glaring self-contradictions."

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latter will then diligently cultivate. In both fields there are periods of crisis, of "creative anarchy," leading to a break-through to new frontiers—followed by decades, or centuries of consolidation, orthodoxy, stagnation, and decadence—until a new crisis arises, of holy discontent, which starts the cycle again.

Just so long as he concerns himself with stylistic innovations, one can see how Koestler's concept of "bisociation" helps to explain the nature of creative originality, in art as much as in science. Equally, the process of frustration, withdrawal, imagination, and insight leading to a new step forward, which was evident in many of his scientific examples, can once more be shown taking place in the minds of those creative artists who have broken with earlier styles and media, and branched out into new and original directions. (Is not to-day's great novelty in painting—Pop Art—well described as a "bisociation" of the pre-existing "matrices" of abstract painting and the mass media?)

Yet in this section, too, Koestler the romantic gets the better of Koestler the psychologist and, as we read, the idea of bisociation gradually loses its initial precision. To begin with, the word had been introduced as a straightforward single-purpose term, whose relevance to any particular example was clear enough. The wine-press and the seal are bisociated to yield moulded lead type (Gutenberg); abstract collage and advertising material are bisociated to yield Pop Art. But Koestler is not content with a good, but restricted theory of artistic *innovation*; what he wants to do is to give an account of all artistic *creation* conforming to the same pattern. Yet how is this to be done? When we turn to consider a run-of-the-mill string quartet or poem, painting or novel, involving no particular stylistic innovations, what are we in that case to say is "bisociated" with what?

For the next fifty pages, Koestler keeps the equation "Creativity = Bisociation" on its feet only by desperate measures, and there are moments when he veers perilously near to literary humbug. In a play, for instance, the bisociation is (he claims) between the actor's real personality and his stage-part, in a painting between "sensory qualities and emotive potential," in a great novel between "incompatible frames of experience or scales of value, illuminated in consciousness by the bisociative act" or more portentously between "the Trivial Plane of everyday life" and "the Tragic Plane . . . the essential solitude of man." In due course, he even uses the term "bisociation" to express his own species of philosophical idealism—

> Man always looks at nature through coloured glasses—through mythological, anthropomorphic, or conceptual matrices—even when he is not conscious of it and believes that he is engaged in "pure vision," unsullied by any meaning.

Thus "form" and "meaning" too are made to serve as a "bisociated" pair, and the way is paved for a general theory of artistic expression owing something to Jung, and something to Bergson and the idealists:

> The difficulty of analysing the aesthetic experience is not due to its irreducible quality, but to the wealth, the unconscious and non-verbal character of the matrices which interlace in it, along ascending gradients in various dimensions. Whether the gradient is as steep and dramatic as in a Grunewald or El Greco, or gently ascending through green pastures, it always points towards a peak—not of technical perfection, but of some archetypal form of experience. . . .
>
> The aesthetic experience aroused by a work of art is derived from a series of bisociative processes which happen virtually at once and cannot be rendered in verbal language without suffering impoverishment and distortion.

This position in philosophical æsthetics combines with his earlier psychological theory of original discovery to yield the following general thesis about the creative capacities of the human mind:

> The *locus in quo* of human creativity is always on the line of intersection between two planes;

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> and in the highest forms of creativity between the Tragic or Absolute, and the Trivial Plane. The scientist discovers the working of eternal laws in the ephemeral grain of sand, or in the contractions of a dead frog's leg hanging on a washing-line. The artist carves out the image of the god which he saw hidden in a piece of wood. The comedian discovers that he has known the god from a plum tree.
>
> This interlacing of the two planes is found in all great works of art, and at the origin of all great discoveries of science. The artist and scientist are condemned—or privileged—to walk on the line of intersection as on a tightrope.

This message is, no doubt, very edifying, but by this time we have left Koestler's psychological theory about the nature of originality far behind. In the process, the very useful term "bisociation" has become fuzzed and blurred, until it has lost most of its explanatory merit. To me, at any rate, this is a sad disappointment. At the outset, Koestler had seemed to be proclaiming for the psychology of invention what Lavoisier declared about chemistry—that "it is time to bring it to a more rigorous way of reasoning," and to abandon the loose and undisciplined linguistic habits characteristic of earlier speculation. In the course of his section on art, however, Koestler's love of generalisation leads him to devalue his own new coinage, to a point at which I find myself echoing Lavoisier's protest about the chemist's use of the term "phlogiston"—

> A vague principle, which they in no way define rigorously, and which in consequence is adaptable to any explanation they please. Now this principle has weight, and again it is weightless; now it is free fire, and again it is fire combined with the element earth; now it penetrates right through the pores of vessels, and again it finds bodies impenetrable. It explains at once causticity and its opposite, translucence and opacity, colours and the absence of colours. It is a veritable Proteus, changing form at every instant.

Then suddenly, at the end, Koestler brings himself back to artistic originality proper, as displayed in the history of art, and we find ourselves back on beam again. The pity is that he does not take sufficient care to distinguish, throughout, between the creative capacities which any artist must have, in the nature of his profession, and the special originativeness which differentiates those men who create new styles or exploit new media. Even a great artist is necessarily for the most part a craftsman; and it is, once again, a romantic fancy to insist on finding "bisociative processes"—in the sense in which Koestler originally defined that phrase—in all artistic creation whatever.

HERE WE MUST LEAVE Koestler's account of human creativity at the highest level, and turn to the general system of biological and psychological concepts in which he seeks to root that account. This occupies the second half of *The Act of Creation*. Once again, it is scarcely possible to summarise his argument, especially as in this second half much of the discussion is at rather a technical level. Still, one can perhaps once more describe and paraphrase the case he puts forward—even though one can do no more than hint at the richness of examples and illustrations which form so impressive a part of his exposition.

The starting-point in this second half is the same as in the first: the idea of a "matrix" characterised by certain "rules of the game." Matrices of this kind (Koestler claims) are to be found in all the manifestations of organic life "from embryonic development to symbolic thought"—

> These rules or codes, whether phylogenetically or ontogenetically acquired, function on all levels of the [organic] hierarchy, from the chromosomes to the neuron-circuits responsible for verbal thinking. Each code represents the fixed, invariant aspect of an adaptable skill or matrix of behaviour. I shall take the stylistic licence of using the word "skill" in a broad sense, as a synonym for "matrix," and shall speak of the morphogenetic skills which enable the egg to grow into a hen, of the vegetative skills of maintaining homeostasis, of perceptual, locomotive, and verbal skills.

(We shall have to ask later whether this very broad use of the word "skill" involves only a *stylistic* licence.)

Starting from this point, Koestler embarks on a thumbnail restatement of the leading discoveries of 20th-century biology and psychology. At every stage he underlines the contrast between fixed, predetermined patterns of growth and activity, and that residual scope for individual variability and interaction with the environment that biologists call "plasticity." In a newly-conceived, single-celled embryo, the "genetic code" transmitted by the DNA molecules which make up the nucleus of the cell serves in many respects to govern and limit the possible ways in which the resulting organism can grow, develop, and behave. To that extent, so to speak, the embryo already has certain in-built physiological and psychological "habits," and its scope for "originality" is thereby curtailed. (The qualification "so to speak" is important.) Yet the existence of these fixed patterns of activity on a lower organic level is in practice a necessary condition, if there is to be any real chance of freedom or development at a higher physiological or psychological level. As Koestler puts it,

> the emergence of life means the emergence of spontaneous, organised exertion to maintain and

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> produce originally unstable forms of equilibrium in a statistically improbable system in the teeth of an environment governed by the laws of probability.

(An example may help: at the physiological level, a spastic cannot achieve anything like the same degree of muscular control as a normal human being, and his behaviour is therefore subject to a much greater degree of physiological variability; yet on that account he must be judged—at the behavioural level—to have *less* scope for freedom and originality, rather than *more*.)

Koestler pays particularly close attention to the facts of embryological development and physiological regeneration. As he emphasises, one of the fundamental capacities of the organism is the ability when necessary to revert to an earlier stage of development (*reculer pour mieux sauter*), so as to re-create or make good the loss of some injured limb or organ. In this, running ahead somewhat, he sees an image prefiguring a spiritual phenomenon—

> the perennial myth of the prophet's and hero's temporary isolation and retreat from human society—followed by his triumphant return endowed with new powers. Buddha and Mohammed go out into the desert; Joseph is thrown into the well; Jesus is resurrected from the tomb. Jung's "death-and-rebirth" motif, Toynbee's "withdrawal and return" reflect the same archetypal motif. It seems that *reculer pour mieux sauter* is a principle of universal validity in the evolution of species, cultures, and individuals, guiding their progression by feedback from the past.

As to this biological phase in Koestler's argument, let me add only one further qualification: though the analogies and resemblances for which he is arguing are in their way quite appealing, he is undiscriminating in the evidence which he quotes to establish them. Though he himself protests later on (p. 556) against applying to human beings psychological conclusions derived from the study of rats and pigeons, for instance, his embryological argument jumps without comment between observations on salamanders, frogs, and human embryos (*cf.* pp. 427–8). We are not, in fact, in a position to *know* at the present moment whether this is entirely legitimate or not.[3] But I do not press the point, for this biological section, like the corresponding section on "The Jester" in the first part, is intended only as a preamble to the more serious discussion of psychology and behaviour.

LET ME SAY AT ONCE that much of Koestler's long and careful discussion of contemporary psychological theory is valuable and pertinent. For the last half-century theoretical psychologists have been as deeply divided into rival schools and "tendencies" as metaphysicians or theologians have ever been. Of the whole field which Arthur Koestler has set himself to explore in this book, no single part has been more

[3] Incidentally, embryology is not a field in which one can safely mix present-day evidence with quotations derived from sources thirty years old or more. In particular, the term "organiser," which Koestler uses without comment, is by now under a cloud among professional biologists—and for good reason—and it is not safe to use the word as though it were strictly equivalent to "evocator" or "inducer." So Koestler's text at this point needs to be read with care. A reference taken at second hand from a book of Michael Polanyi's to a paper published by C. H. Waddington in 1932 hardly rates as highly as an encyclopædia article by Jean Brachet dated 1955, and one would have preferred to see the argument based on—say—Waddington's own post-1960 work. Incidentally, some straightforward corrections are again required: *e.g.*, the formation of two complete frogs from the separated halves of a frog-egg and the production of rudimentary kidneys from individual cells taken from the kidney area are *not* examples of the same phenomenon as the re-formation of a living sponge from its dissociated cells (pp. 423–4).

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in need of attention from a sympathetic, unprejudiced, and eclectic observer. In a warmly-phrased foreword Professor Sir Cyril Burt commends Koestler's attempt to bring together and integrate into a single consistent scheme the separate results which have been achieved by psychologists of all these different tendencies. And in this respect his praise—so far as I am in a position to judge—appears well deserved. At this stage Koestler turns away from his attempt to generalise the notion of "bisociation." Instead, he makes it his business to do something rather different—namely, to show how all the great and apparently disorderly variety of human behaviour and activities can be ordered as a hierarchy of skills, in which those at the higher level presuppose, and are dependent upon, the previous acquisition of those at the lower level. From the moment of birth, when our instinctual skills and capacities are—necessarily—our only psychological equipment, we gradually acquire more and more complex abilities: the ability to "perceive" (for it is important to realise that perceiving *is* something we "do"), the ability to generalise and discriminate, the ability to recognise causes, etc. Furthermore, Koestler shows, the capacity to move on from any one level to the next is bound up with the possession of an "inherent exploratory drive," and apart from this the behaviour even of rats and pigeons (to say nothing of human behaviour) cannot be properly understood. This is the point at which Koestler makes his most important and original contributions to psychological theory, for exploratory and creative activities are precisely those with which recent psychological theories have been least successful in dealing.

> It took experimental psychology nearly fifty years to re-discover, after its Dark Ages of need-reducing S.R. [stimulus-response] theories, that rats and men are pleasure-seeking creatures, that some activities are pleasurably self-rewarding, and that exploring the environment, solving a chess problem, or learning to play the guitar are among these activities.

Those who could envisage only a pattern of external stimuli producing behavioural responses were at a loss to explain (say) how a rat sometimes learns to run through a maze without actually having this learning "reinforced" by punishments or rewards—

> Several writers have considered the possibility that [this kind of learning] comes from the reduction of curiosity. . . . One might as well say that composing a song is a silence-reducing activity.

All this has a considerable bearing on our understanding of human behaviour, and leads to a system of ideas more comprehensive and adequate than we get from either pure learning-theory or pure *Gestalt* theory:

> On the elementary levels of learning a skill a varying amount of stamping-in is required, depending on the organism's "ripeness" for the task; or, to put it the other way round, depending on the "naturalness" of the task relative to the organism's existing skills. Learning to type requires more stamping-in than learning to ride a bicycle; the former is comparable to the blindfold memorising of a maze, the latter to the gradual adjustment of the various interlocking servo-mechanisms. . . . But even in acquiring a mechanical skill like typing, bit-by-bit learning plays in fact a lesser part than seems to be the case. The typist's mental map of the keyboard is not simply a rote-learned aggregation of twenty-six letters (plus numbers and signs) distributed at random; it is a "coded" map, structured by a system of co-ordinates—the resting position of the fingers—and by the frequency-rating of letters, syllables, etc. . . . Whole-learning invades bit-learning at every opportunity; if the meaningless is to be retained, the mind must smuggle meaning into it.

At every level, accordingly, we build a kind of "floor" of routine activities, which gives meaning to one whole range of concepts; then, in turn, this "floor" serves as the foundation on to which a higher range or "storey" of activities is built, with its own more sophisticated range of concepts and meanings. And the step by which we pass up from one floor to the next above is neither a pure process of trial-and-error, nor a brand-new intellectual leap—something coming entirely "out of the blue," without any previous preparation. It is, Koestler argues, a genuine act of *discovery*, in which we "put two and two together"—or, as Hebb puts it, "our evidence thus points to the conclusion that a new insight consists of a *re-combination of pre-existent mediating processes*, not the sudden appearance of a wholly new process."

FINALLY, we are back again at the level of thought, language, and symbolism in general. Koestler's last five chapters present a theory of thinking intended to link together the account of originality contained in the first half with the ideas about biology and psychology making up most of the second. Here, I confess—and this may be my fault as much as his—I find myself once again losing sympathy with him. A general framework of psychological theory such as he had outlined during the previous hundred pages could naturally have been extended into the linguistic field in such a way as to produce something valuable and important for philosophy as well as for psychology. Indeed, the pattern of analysis he adopts for characterising pre-linguistic and non-linguistic be-

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haviour has genuine and significant analogies to the pattern of analysis used by Ludwig Wittgenstein in his later years to describe the linguistic and symbolic activities which give "meaning" to our concepts. The "rules of the game" associated with the "coding" of Koestler's behavioural "matrices" immediately call to mind the rules of the "language-games" in terms of which Wittgenstein explained how our linguistic symbols are related to non-linguistic "forms of life"; and the same sort of hierarchy that Koestler recognises in pre-linguistic behaviour was recognised and described by Wittgenstein as an essential feature (or structure) within the pattern of linguistic activities. To give one specific example: Koestler's whole discussion of Köhler's experiments on the counting abilities of lower animals and birds and the relation of these experiments to the human capacity to calculate symbolically, gains a new depth and interest if read in conjunction with Wittgenstein's discussion of the same subject in *The Brown Book*.

I say this, not out of professional concern as an "analytical philosopher," nor out of personal loyalty to Wittgenstein, but rather because, through neglecting the results achieved by recent philosophical analysis in Britain and America, Koestler is led to take up some unnecessarily naïve philosophical positions. His insistence that the behaviour-patterns associated with our linguistic concepts are fully developed before the relevant *word* becomes attached to them is very just. But in expounding the implications of this important point he places too much weight on an over-simple "reference" theory of meaning—words for him are "labels," which acquire meaning through being used to "refer to" things. This section of his book would have been more illuminating if he had taken more notice of the central insight of contemporary analytical philosophy: namely, that "labelling" and "reference" represent only one of the many different ways in which words become associated with behaviour-patterns in the course of our conceptual and mental life. (There is no obvious reason why he should have rejected this particular refinement: from time to time, indeed, his actual style and choice of examples recalls Gilbert Ryle.) It seems to be his obsession with neurology—which makes him speak of "the neuron-circuits *responsible for* verbal thinking" where others might prefer to say "correlated," or "associated with"—that leads him to prefer a crude and muddled account of concept-formation written by a

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neuro-surgeon who is, philosophically speaking, little further on than Locke or Berkeley to the more sophisticated and discriminating accounts of the same phenomenon that he could have got from contemporary analytical philosophers.

CAN ONE PASS any general verdict on *The Act of Creation* as a whole? It is too soon for a final judgment, but let me do my best. As in the first half, the second half of the book contains a substantial amount of novel and illuminating material flawed by the same aspiration to be all-embracing. In the first part, Koestler started with an admirable theory of originality, but forced it beyond its proper scope so as to make it serve as a completely general account of creativity. In the second part he began with a clear idea about how to weave together harmoniously the ravelled strands of theoretical psychology, but once again he was tempted to extend the resulting notion of a "hierarchy" too far—aiming at a single system reaching downwards to embrace embryology and biochemistry, and upwards to a union with scientific and artistic originality. In both cases, his fundamental concepts will not stand up to the strain he puts upon them. Just as his notion of "bisociation" ended up by being as vague as "phlogiston," so now his "organic hierarchy of activities," each with its own "codes" and "rules of the game," ends up as a mere aggregate of partial analogies. It is always the death of a theory to be made to *do too much*—to be stretched and stretched until it can explain absolutely anything. When criticising other people's arguments Koestler sees this point clearly enough: when he remarks of the term "regeneration" that it is "difficult to find a satisfactory definition which would embrace the whole range of phenomena to which the term is applied," or dismisses Pavlov in the words, "'Conditioning' is still a useful term when applied to induced changes in glandular and visceral reactions, but leads to confusion when used in a loose, analogical way for other types of learning." It is not easy to exonerate Koestler's use of the terms "bisociation," "matrix," "code," and "rule" from the same charge.

The trouble is that, once the necessary steps are taken to escape this particular charge, *The Act of Creation* simply falls apart. It was written as two separate books, and it is in fact two separate books. As things stand, the two halves do not have much to do with one another, though—to do Koestler justice—it is possible that the connections he would like to see between them may be better established a hundred years hence. At the present time, at any rate, the central conceptual spine around which Koestler has organised his argument embodies not so much a scientific theory as a philosophical vision of nature. It may eventually prove legitimate to equate the mechanisms of physiological and biochemical genesis, the development of new routines of behaviour at all levels, and the creative originality of human artists and scientists—and to embrace them all under a single concept. But, with all respect, I must say that Koestler has not convinced me that this time has yet come. For the moment, the things in his new book to which I shall turn again with pleasure and fascination are, first, his sensitive and humane reconstructions of the intellectual quandaries facing earlier scientists (except the unsympathetic Aristotle) and, second, his re-ordering of psychological theory into a hierarchy of habits and novel discoveries.

WHAT KOESTLER GIVES US HERE is a vision of nature. One can go further, and add that it is an essentially *romantic* vision of nature. Koestler set out to stake his claims as a scientist. But he proves to be, rather, a natural philosopher in the manner of Goethe. In several ways, indeed, the system of ideas which he has been developing in his own mind from the days of *Insight and Outlook*, through *The Sleepwalkers*, to *The Act of Creation* resembles Goethe's own natural philosophy. This fact shows itself not merely in Koestler's positive theses, but equally in his prejudices and hostilities. For, as so often, the overall direction of his thought shows itself particularly clearly in his polemical passages, where he takes a dogmatic stand in order to preserve his system of ideas more rigidly than our present understanding really justifies.

For example, Koestler shares with earlier romantics and idealists an exaggerated suspicion of formal logic. ("The so-called law of contradiction . . . is a late acquisition in the growth of individuals and cultures. . . . The unconscious mind, the mind of the child and the primitive, are indifferent to it. So are the Eastern philosophies which teach the unity of opposites, as well as Western theologians and quantum physicists.") The intrusion of mathematics into science, and the reliance on intellectual abstraction have also, in his view, been overdone. In the circumstances it is perhaps surprising that he is quite so venomous about Aristotle, with whose dynamic view of nature Goethe and the subsequent Romantics had a good deal in common. Perhaps it is only Aristotle's *Physics* that Koestler rejects—though I, for one, would be happier if he had produced for inspection just *one* of the "glaringly evident self-contradictions" he finds in it. (Be as charitable in interpreting Aristotle as Koestler is towards Kepler, and these deficiencies will soon disappear.)

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It is understandable, of course, that Koestler should be merciless in rejecting psychological behaviourism: this is one of the main targets against which he produces some very solid and satisfactory arguments. His attacks on neo-Darwinism, on the other hand, are more modish and cliquey. Like Michael Polanyi, Marjorie Grene, and Gertrude Himmelfarb, he begins by caricaturing contemporary evolutionary genetics, and then pours scorn on his own caricature. (I know of *no* evolutionist who teaches that "the courtship and fighting rituals of various species have all evolved by 'pure chance,'" and *all* evolutionists recognise that evolution by natural selection frequently involves *pre*-adaptation to a changing environment.) What I do think Koestler needs to do is to reconcile his *rejection* of chance, as a principal factor in organic evolution, with his positive *espousal* of it as a factor in discovery (*cf.*, "the familiar pattern of a playful habit being connected with a blocked matrix, with chance acting as a trigger").

In one respect above all, Koestler's attempt to wed 20th-century science and philosophical romanticism into a unified natural philosophy ends by producing intellectual difficulties. These show themselves in his highly-ambivalent attitude towards "mechanistic" ideas. As a romantic, he must surely be as opposed to a purely mechanical view of human nature as he is to evolution-through-pure-chance and to mathematical reductionism. Sure enough, he rejects Francis Galton's teaching that the chains of association by which ideas are brought into our minds act "in a mechanically logical way"—indeed, he registers a formal protest against this doctrine. He takes a sideswipe in passing at "this computer age" and disputes the idea that modern biochemistry and psychology have proved man to be "a marionette on strings, with the only difference that he was now suspended on the nucleic acid chains determining his heredity, and the conditioned-reflex chains forged by the environment." Indeed, the whole point of his book is to demonstrate that, by his scientific and artistic creativity, man escapes from the habitual action of a conditioned automaton—achieving "the defeat of habit by originality."

So MUCH FOR his romantic side: yet see, now, how Koestler himself describes the process by which creative originality operates. This is something for which "the workings of the nervous system" are "responsible." The scientist or artist with "the prepared mind" stops thinking about his problem, leaves his brain to get on with the job, and is eventually taken by surprise, when the solution of his problem pops unannounced into his consciousness, of itself. During this Night Journey, this "inner scanning" of the mind, this retreat to free creative association, the scientist or artist is not imposing his will on the world. Rather, he is giving full rein to cause and chance, and waiting for some combination of ideas to come up which fits the precise requirements of his problem (*cf.*, the example of Franklin). Two things alone differentiate the great artist and scientist: (*1*) the possession of a fertile mind, well-stocked with experience, which he can leave to churn over of itself until something promising turns up; and (*2*) the capacity to recognise a worthwhile novelty when it presents itself, regardless of its source or origin. Where the bisociations come from does not matter, provided that he can match solutions to problems when they appear.

Yet is a theory of originality expressed in such terms necessarily anti-mechanistic at all? Leaving aside all romantic prejudices, and considering only the scientific content of Koestler's theory, one must surely answer: "No." On the contrary, the trouble with all dogmatically anti-mechanistic positions is this—the machines always catch up with them. For, in the first place, the very concept of a "machine," or of

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a "mechanical" mode of operation, is itself inherently vague. The machines of Descartes' and Newton's day were one thing, those of Faraday's and Edison's day another; those of our "computer age" yet a third. The thesis that "man is a machine" has, accordingly, always been inherently ambiguous—is it the *actual* machines of the time in question which are to serve as the objects of comparison, or rather some *conceivable* machines not yet built? In fact, it has rarely done scientists very much good either to assert, or to deny, this particular thesis in general terms; the only useful thing is to ask how far machines of some specified kind can be built to simulate human activity of some other specified kind.

WE ARE THEREFORE LEFT with the question: "Are machines capable of original discovery?" Or rather, "Are electronic computers of a kind already in existence capable of performing those particular activities which Arthur Koestler recognises as distinctively creative and originative?" The answer to this question is: "Yes." The latest generation of electronic computers, such as those used for the programme of research on "machine-aided cognition" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have in fact been built to do just that: they are capable of making inductions, of matching hypotheses to phenomena, and so of making scientific discoveries in Koestler's sense. Two things about the methods by which these "originative" or "creative" thinking-machines operate serve, indeed, to reinforce Koestler's theory about the nature of originality. In the first place, they are programmed by building into them criteria and conditions which must be satisfied by any solution to the problems they are going subsequently to be set. That is, they are given an "eye" for a solution. In the second place, they are so constructed that, when a problem is fed into them through a teletype-input, they then start "bisociating" at high speed, according to a randomised pattern determined by their electronic ("neural") connections, and they continue to do so until a particular bisociation turns up satisfying the initial requirements. Nor am I merely describing a *possible* or *conceivable* machine: such things already exist, and are being used experimentally for such practical purposes as medical diagnosis.

What does this prove? For me, personally, not very much; since I myself do not think we are compelled to *deny* the possibility of computers doing original creative thought. But I do think the existence of such machines creates a problem for Mr. Koestler, for it drives a wedge between the two elements in his position—his romantic philosophy and his scientific theory. In the long run, I believe, he will be forced to make a choice between them.

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Tough and Tender

A Moveable Feast. By ERNEST HEMINGWAY. *Jonathan Cape*, 18s.

The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald. *Bodley Head*, 50s.

"I talk with the authority of failure—Ernest with the authority of success. We could never sit across the same table again." (SCOTT FITZGERALD—NOTEBOOKS.)

GERTRUDE STEIN, sceptical as to Hemingway's toughness and jealous of his success, once wrote: "What a book would be the real story of Hemingway, not those he writes but the confessions of the real Ernest Hemingway." Well, now we have the nearest thing to that story we are ever likely to get. Of course it is not "the real story." It is a deliberately and rather felicitously constructed version of the twenties as a doomed idyll. He portrays a time of pure beginnings, when nothing was spoilt, when talent burgeoned with love, and when rich vivid impressions were eagerly hoarded up by the unclouded wondering eye. (He seems to have had total recall of all the meals he had during this time.) There are paragraphs of exquisitely accurate notation which evoke that time with undulled intensity. But he sees this time from the perspective of age, so that the dawn brightness is occasionally darkened by sombre intimations of twilight. The recaptured sense of the young time when everything was possible is sobered by the recurrent realisation that nothing lasts.

This is of course an exercise in nostalgia, but it is a controlled exercise: a few well-placed shadows prevent the vivid recollections from spilling over into deliquescent idealisation. The book starts with rain, cold wind, and stripped trees—"Then there was the bad weather"—and in Hemingway's work such weather always carries overtones of menace, transience, and loss. It ends with Hemingway having been unfaithful to his wife and already suffering some of the corruption of success. Looking back at Eden Hemingway can see some of the trampled flowers, and while the stress is on innocent happiness there are muted portents of the fall and banishment to come. Hints—"'We're always lucky,' I said, and like a fool I did not knock on wood"—and the final realisation—"All things truly wicked start from an innocence. So you live day by day and enjoy what you have and do not worry. You lie and hate it and it destroys you and every day is more dangerous, but you live day to day as in a war." But for most of the book the scene is as follows: Hemingway sitting safely in a familiar café ("A Clean, Well-Lighted Place"?). He writes, eats, and drinks. Then he makes his way quickly, even cautiously, across Paris until he is home (as all Hemingway heroes long to find a true "home"). There he makes love and relishes the sense of sanctuary. Occasionally there are marvellous trips or walks with his wife or some particular friend who shares his own quiet reverence for ordinary things.

BUT THERE are interruptions, intruders in paradise who stop him from working or soil the sacred intimacy of his home. Real toads in the ideal garden. Like Ford Madox Ford ("heavy, wheezing, ignoble presence"), Wyndham Lewis ("I do not think I have ever seen a nastier-looking man"), and the unnamed visitor who dares to enter Hemingway's "home café" to be greeted—"You rotten son of a bitch, what are you doing in here off your filthy beat?" There are some angels—Ezra Pound with his endless generosity and help, Sylvia Beach for lending books and money, the euphoric Pascin—but throughout the book one senses an almost neurotic resentment at the uninvited proximity of other people, a pugnacious fear of their contagion. This impression is strengthened by his amazing statement to Gertrude Stein when he is explaining his prejudice against homosexuals. "I tried to tell Miss Stein that when you were a boy and moved in the company of men, you had to be prepared to kill a man, know how to do it, and really know that you would do it in order not to be interfered with." Remember Malcolm Cowley describing how Hemingway always moved around like a boxer?—and the incredible importance he attached to his sparring? One character in the book says that Hemingway looks like "a man alone in the jungle," but he sounds more like an animal at bay in the jungle, snarling to scare off a threat which is sensed, feared, but not yet seen.

Even the humour in the book (and parts are very funny) is rather cutting—a weapon rather than a joy. Hemingway certainly reveals himself more nakedly than he can have intended. What he intends to look tough starts to appear neurotic. The book is written with a good deal of arrogance: every episode is turned to leave Hemingway looking tougher, more talented, more honest, more dignified than anyone else. When he touches on his faults—and "touches" is the word—they turn out to be those of the sportsman (gambling) or of the dedicated artist (bad temper). When he does upbraid himself it is embarrassingly theatrical. "You God-damn complainer. You dirty phony saint and martyr, I said to myself." This pseudo self-criticism in Hemingway-ese is merely a matter of posturing—the reverse of self-knowledge. And behind all the aggressive implications that

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Hemingway alone has the secret of the good life, one detects the over-assertiveness of a man troubled by anxiety and fear, a man whose tight tough confidence seems strained by wariness and suspicion, a man mythologising himself to avoid confronting himself. A "fragile" man, as someone once commented.

This makes one look again at the style. It is a prose marvellously attuned to registering distinct, unhurried impressions; it is a prose of veracity, paying meticulous respect to the real. But it is also a defence strategy. Hemingway's prose seems to expect trouble. When it is not celebrating some safe idyllic moment of sensory delight, it is clarifying potential opposition. His words sometimes seem to have a sort of sentry quality—cautious to expect attack and disciplined to deal with it. He has interesting things to say about his style in this book. The rule that "All you have to do is write one true sentence" to get started; the resolve to write "one story about each thing that I knew about" (*i.e.*, separation is preferred to synthesis); the influence of Cézanne (just as Stein said she wrote *Three Lives* looking at a still-life by Cézanne); the use of rhythms and repetitions which he learned from Stein (an important factor in Hemingway's creation of the stylised vernacular as a style); the theory of omitting things to achieve greater power; and perhaps most interestingly the description of Ezra Pound as "the man who had taught me to distrust adjectives as I would later learn to distrust certain people in certain situations." *Distrust*. That is what—in this book—one senses in the man and the style. When life isn't idyllic it is likely to be a fight (the importance Hemingway attaches to mutilation as evidence of genuine warriorship crops up again)—so, never relax your guard. The clean, controlled stoicism of Hemingway's earlier work still seems to me a major achievement—but when distrust becomes a style all is not well within. (In this connection it is perhaps interesting to note Hemingway's intense interest in routes. It is there in an early story like "In Another Country" and much in evidence in his later work. Here it occurs with varying accounts of traversing Paris. Of course it is part of Hemingway's scrupulous regard for topography, his interest in terrain; but remembering that on the last car ride before his suicide he was pathologically anxious about the route and kept on consulting the map, perhaps we can suggest that it is a symptom of some unusually deep anxiety. Does some of the intense step-picking care of his prose come from a general fear of losing the way?)

THE MOST interesting and moving part of the book describes his relations with Fitzgerald in France. Some of the glimpses afforded us are arrestingly authentic. Scott passing out "at the table with his head on his hands. It was natural and there was no theatre about it, and it even looked as though he were careful not to spill nor break things": Scott's face suddenly paling into a "death mask" while they are standing at a bar, his "long-lipped" Irish mouth which "worried you until you knew him and then it worried you more." There is a shrewd analysis of the logic of the Fitzgeralds' drinking, and some chilling insights into Zelda's terrible destructive jealousy. Her smile, for instance, as yet another party got under way. "I learned to know that smile very well. It meant she knew Scott would not be able to write." There is an amusing account of a disastrous visit to Lyon and a comic chapter called "A Matter of Measurements" which is about exactly what you might think. Typically, it shows Hemingway in the role of confessor and adviser, a sort of calm superman counselling the fallen and weak. Clearly the careful Hemingway had to be wary of the Fitzgeralds and the chaos they brought in their wake: but what is irritating is the way he manages to patronise Fitzgerald, subtly cutting him down and belittling him. He admits in passing that Scott was a loyal friend, rather as a lord might accept fealty owing to him, but it is Hemingway who graciously stoops to offer a hand: "I knew that no matter what Scott did, nor how he behaved, I must know it was like a sickness and be of any help I could to him and try to be a good friend." This is wretched distortion. In fact it was the successful Fitzgerald who pushed and helped the unknown Hemingway, and when Fitzgerald was really down and out, Hemingway, by way of friendship, included a cruelly contemptuous reference to him in his story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." Such distortion—one feels it runs through the book—suggests that the work was written not with the authority, but with the *anxiety* of success.

TO TURN to Fitzgerald is to enter a different world, or rather the world registered and approached in an entirely different spirit. Where Hemingway's work feels closed, constricted, aggressive, and suspicious in its fierce accuracy, Fitzgerald's seems open, expansive, loving, always moving towards moments of lyric suggestiveness. Where Hemingway seems to be holding back, putting up defences, husbanding his resources, Fitzgerald strikes us as precipitously involved and exposed, giving himself to the moment, squandering himself until his life seems like an allegory of his times—his twenties the Boom, his thirties the Depression. There is no distrust in his tone: he prefers to celebrate

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life, to be generous to its fleeting nuances, and where he has to record failure, dissolution, and degradation, he does so with understanding, balance, and a compassionate poise such as is attained only by those who are uncompromisingly self-aware, unfaltering in honesty to the very heart of darkness and loss.

This means, for a start, that Fitzgerald is far more perceptive about Hemingway than Hemingway is about him. He respected and admired Hemingway all his life (he was even planning to make him the hero of a series of medieval stories!), he praised the quality of his style ("a stick hardened in the fire"), and always spoke glowingly about the order and purity of his work. But he could also read the man plain. An early note reads "it is undeniable that the dark was peopled for him," and when Hemingway made the cruel reference in "Snows" Fitzgerald wrote to a friend: "He is quite as nervously broken down as I am but it manifests itself in different ways. His inclination is toward megalomania and mine toward melancholy." But still—"Somehow I love that man, no matter what he says or does." To a friend he explained that it was all part of Hemingway's "sadistic maladjustment" which made him go round knocking people down. The mixture of love and clear-sighted judgment is typical. Hemingway thought life ought to be lived in a certain way and he strove to shut out anything he did not understand or didn't approve. But Fitzgerald followed life wherever it led him, even when it led him to the bottom of the abyss. For this reason he can understand loss, waste, and the general mortality of human things much better than Hemingway, who tends merely to register them with dumb resentment. Fitzgerald was a romantic whose work includes a definitive critique of romanticism: as in *Gatsby* he understood both "the dream" and the "foul dust" that floats in its wake. His insight into complexities of character was far subtler than Hemingway's (compare the analysis of Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned* with the sentimental wish-fulfilment figure of Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms*), and where Hemingway's early stoicism became a somewhat shrill and desperate tough-guyism, Fitzgerald's young abandoned revelry gradually gave way to true wisdom.

THE LETTERS reveal this process admirably. Although the arrangement according to recipient is an unfortunate idea (it breaks up the

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trajectory of the life into slim fragments) this volume is a major document in American literature. For Fitzgerald's "crack-up" was representative, and his deepening awareness of the causes, together with his heroic efforts of recuperation and his maturing moral insight, enabled him to make a contribution to "the conscience of the race" which perhaps no one else could have made. It is not so much a man's experience that counts but what he brings back from it—and Fitzgerald brought back a great deal. He did this because he had that sort of dual attitude he ascribed to the narrator of *Gatsby*: "I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life." It is what Cowley called his "intimacy with distance" which makes his testimony so authoritative.

The letters to his daughter are perhaps as remarkable as any. No pretence, no glossing over of his faults, no subtle pleas for sympathy and exoneration; rather, cool self-assessment plus an intense loving concern that she shouldn't make the same mistakes. "You have got to make all the right changes at the main corners —the price for losing your way once is years of unhappiness." "I never blame failure—but I am absolutely merciless toward lack of effort." "To say I will do valuable and indispensable work is the part of wisdom and courage." He tells her to develop the tragic sense of life, "the sense that life is essentially a cheat and its conditions are those of defeat, and that the redeeming things are not happiness and pleasure but the deeper satisfactions that come out of struggle." He is touchingly frank about his physical condition—"you may find me depressing, over-nervous about small things, and dogmatic"—but he speaks with confidence of "the impersonal and objective quality of my talent" and even at his low point he assures her he is a "moralist" and not an "entertainer." One stray comment reveals just how much of himself Fitzgerald gave to his work: "I think writing is a sheer paring away of oneself leaving always something thinner, barer, more meagre." And there is one unforgettable sentence concerning his mad wife whom he so patiently supported: "The insane are always mere guests on earth, eternal strangers carrying around broken decalogues that they cannot read." To Zelda in her asylum he writes with no reproaches and no tears: only a firm and candid kindness: "I don't want or expect happiness for myself—only peace enough to keep us all going." "Your life has been a disappointment, as mine has been too. But we haven't gone through this sweat for nothing. Scottie has got to survive."

The important letters to Maxwell Perkins reveal his youthful ebullience and hopes, his interest in and concern for other writers, and his sad realisation about how he has squandered his resources: ("he suddenly realised the meaning of the word dissipate—to dissipate into thin air; to make nothing out of something." *Babylon Revisited*). There are fine insights into his own intention: "the attempt to recapture the exact feel of a moment in time and space, exemplified by people rather than things... an attempt at a mature memory of a deep experience." He considered that he shared this aim with Hemingway and Wolfe, but none of them captured that quality of "hauntedness" (his own perfect description) which so distinguishes his best work. To Hemingway he is encouraging, generous, sometimes teasing ("I hear that you have finished a novel a hundred thousand words long consisting entirely of the word 'balls' used in new groupings"), and always respectful. There is an interesting difference of æsthetic opinion in which Fitzgerald defends the scope of imagination against a precise literalism. Both men were interested in appealing to "lingering after-effects in the reader's mind," both favoured the "dying fall" at the end of a story, but they sought to achieve this in different ways: one through understatement, the other by "hauntedness." A later letter to the Murphys brings out the difference more clearly. Fitzgerald says he has always tried "to dig up the relevant, the essential, and especially the dramatic and glamorous from whatever life is around." But he is entering a new phase. "I used to think that my sensory impression of the world came from outside.... Now I know it was within, and emphatically cherish what little is left." Hemingway trusted only what was verifiable by the five senses: Fitzgerald's vision was lit up by his own sensitive and searching imagination.

Of course, added to that tender imagination was a capacity for cool detached judgment: the mixture was responsible for that "softness and hardiness" which Fitzgerald found in himself and we can still detect in his work. It is all a part of the paradox of this romantic who considered "unflinching rationality" a supreme value; the party-goer, "drunk for ten years," who asserted the importance of "a personal conscience," *i.e.*, "yourself stripped in white midnight before your own God." It is in such a spirit that he can write to a married woman with whom he has had a brief affair: "We can't just let our worlds crash around us like a lot of dropped trays. *You have got to be good....* But if you are not *good*, your love is a mess and your courage a slaughter." That is not sententious—it is part of what he had learned from life during those white midnight hours.

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THERE ARE letters dealing with financial matters, for he accumulated a formidable array of debts; immensely kind letters of consolation, encouragement, and help; letters which are drunk, comic, and gay, or sombre, philosophic, and resolute; but never a note of self-pity. "Vitality," he once wrote, "shows in the ability to start over," and Fitzgerald showed that ability, even when he had terribly overdrawn on all his resources. With the crack-up, he writes, "I was impelled to think. God, was it difficult! The moving about of great secret trunks." Few people can move those trunks, and it testifies to a very real moral energy that Fitzgerald was able to pass from the wild spree of his youth, through a nightmare of "waste and horror," on to a sober recognition of "the eternal necessary human values."

He finished up a "forgotten man," doing hack-work in Hollywood, his books out of print, his work unappreciated. It is almost a punishment: the writer who made so much out of the "American dream," who was betrayed by it, and then sentenced to work at the great dream factory itself, where everything, he found, was "either corruption or indifference." Yet there is no cynicism, no hating. ("I have honestly never gone in for hating."). A letter just before he died ends: "Love to all of you, of all generations," and the gesture, if quixotic, is somehow utterly representative of the whole man. In bitter moments he could refer to America as "the story of the moon that never rose," but elsewhere he more memorably describes it as "a willingness of the heart." Fitzgerald was not drawn to mere riches, though they may have destroyed him. It was more a matter of being spell-bound by life's possibilities. "Like Gatsby, I have only hope": that gift which finally killed Gatsby brought Fitzgerald to the point of complete disintegration. "So quick bright things come to confusion." That was when he described himself as "a cracked plate." But here his romanticism was mastered by a modest recognition of the continuing responsibilities and the on-going challenge of life. "Sometimes, though, the cracked plate has to be kept in service as a household necessity. It can never again be warmed on the stove nor shuffled with the other plates in the dishpan; it will not be brought out for company, but it will do to hold crackers late at night or to go into the ice box under left-overs."

That sounds like a kind of success to me—a moral success. One cannot imagine Hemingway accepting a similar second-rate role in a comparable spirit. But then, distrust leads invariably to a slow strangulation of the spirit, whereas Fitzgerald's generous openness to life made for a heartening flexibility and resilience. There is that revealing entry in his notebooks: "Forbearance, good word." When Hemingway cracked up he blew his head off: Fitzgerald soldiered on until his heart stopped. Willing, but over-spent. Spent but not wasted. "It is from the failures of life, and not its successes, that we learn most." These letters alone are enough to justify Fitzgerald's wry yet accurate aphorism.

Tony Tanner

Party Word Game

Pamphleteering Galore — By KEITH KYLE

AT A TIME during the war when curiosity about Marshal Tito's personality and ideology was at its height a group of Oxford dons assembled to hear a senior Titoist who had been smuggled out. For well over an hour, in harshly accented English, he gave them variations on a narrow range of slogans. "Teeeto stands for—*So-cialeesm*! Teeeto stands for—*Federal-eesm*!" And so forth.

If we were to construct from recent socialist pamphleteers[1] some such slogans for the British Labour Party of 1964, what would we come up with? Pride of place would have to go to a 1959 repeat (the central theme of Roy Jenkins' Penguin then):

"SOCIALISM MEANS MAKING BRITAIN AS EFFICIENT AS CAPITALISM MAKES WEST GERMANY."

The old familiar league tables are out, brought up to date, with Britain down at the bottom for productivity, investment, export expansion; other non-socialist countries are ahead.

But out on the New Frontier (a name that has from the first had associations for me of a Las

[1] *Why Labour?* By Jim Northcott (a Penguin Special, 3s. 6d.). *Labour's New Frontiers.* By Peter Hall (ed.), Brian Abel-Smith, Claudio Veliz, John Corina, Christopher Foster, Peter Pulzer, Roy Pryce, Henry Rée, Edward Shils (André Deutsch, Paperback, 12s. 6d.).

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Vegas gambling saloon) something fresh is stirring.

"SOCIALISM MEANS GREATER RELIANCE ON THE PRICE MECHANISM."

"The case for priority," says Peter Hall, the editor of *Labour's New Frontiers*, in relation to the control of traffic density in towns, "is essentially an argument for the use of the price mechanism. . . . The essential feature of the pricing argument is that the use of the roads is not to be restricted at any arbitrary level. The price mechanism is to be called in to perform the job which only it can do efficiently: to ration a scarce resource in such a way that those who want it can obtain most of it." Again, over housing, Hall writes: "Above a fixed minimum housing standard the customer should have freedom of choice [shades of Winston Churchill's safety-net-and-ladder]. . . . And to secure the most economic allocation of houseroom there should be rationing by price."

"SOCIALISM STANDS FOR GREATER SECURITY FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE."

Confidence among businessmen, explains Jim Northcott in the Labour Penguin, is destroyed by "stop-go-stop" policies which confront those who are thinking of expanding investment with the prospect of being left holding excess capacity when the Government lurches into a credit squeeze. Therefore "planning can stimulate investment by taking most of the risk out of it."

"SOCIALISM STANDS FOR NEEDS TEST."

On many fronts Labour is moving away from flat-level welfare benefits, which were needed for dignity because the Means Test used to be mean. Since it is plainly too expensive to raise benefits for everyone, socialist writers propose the use of the income tax machinery to introduce discrimination without humiliation. A tax code would qualify for supplements to income as well as assess deductions from it. Approbatory references to differential rent schemes for council houses are now in order.

IF THE SEMANTICS of political utterances are any guide—and recent analytical studies like Koebner and Schmidt's *Imperialism* and Granzow's *A Mirror of Nazism* suggest that they are—the prize in Britain is being dangled before the most convincing pragmatist. Which party can demonstrate that the other is the more hampered by Doctrine or Prejudice from carrying out the remedies to which the political consensus of the moment inclines? Given the all-party overlap of fashionable concepts—economic planning, regional development, growth projections, incomes policy, more application of science (including social science), less amateurism all round—which party starts off on the ardours of a new Parliament laden with less superfluous baggage?

Graham Wallas, who in 1908 launched in his *Human Nature in Politics* the idea of the "political image" which is now so commonplace and remarked on the similarity of party campaigning to commercial advertising, wrote also that when a candidate speaks "there is between him and his audience the party mask, larger and less mobile than his own face, like the mask which enabled actors to be seen and heard in the vast open-air theatres of Greece." But in politics it is not merely the individual who must wear a party mask, which, as Wallas goes on, "if he can no longer act the part with sincerity" he can change for "the mask of another party." It is also the party which wears idea masks—emotively powerful arguments and analogies which develop lives of their own, independent of the identity of their first users—and these masks too can change hands.

In Northcott's Penguin there are two instructive examples. The argument of "business confidence" so long identified with the Conservatives is, as we have seen, boldly bid for this time by Labour. Government will give confidence to businessmen by acting consistently on the assumption that the plan will in fact be carried out. The instability spot is put on the Tories for "stop-go-stop" of the last thirteen years. Secondly, the old saw about the nation's accounts being the same thing as the housewife's budget has turned up again. It was never true, but much beloved of Conservatives wanting to cut expenditure (and still so used in the United States Congress, where leading Congressmen have lived for decades under the delusion that the U.S.A. is so near to bankruptcy that the bailiffs are poised waiting to rush in). But this time, Northcott's good housewife plans her house just the way Mr. Wilson plans to plan Britain, or perhaps *vice versa*.

But the most impressive example of all is the way in which the mask of growth economics is being assiduously fitted to the Conservative face. The Conservatives have, it appears, decided that their policies in the economic sphere do not work—there is certainly no defence of them in the Conservative pamphlets before us[2]—and that it is time to try out the policies of

[2] *Why Conservative?* By Timothy Raison (a Penguin Special, 3s. 6d.). *The Welfare State*. By Peter Goldman (Right-Angle Books. Michael Joseph. Paperback, 6s.). *In the Shadow of the Sword*. By Philip Goodhart, M.P. (Right-Angle Books. Michael Joseph. 6s.).

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their opponents. "Clearly in a party which has never stressed finality," declares Timothy Raison, the Tories' Penguin pamphleteer, "basic principles are as prone to change as its composition or actual practice have been. The Tory Party indeed is often able to pick from alternative principles whichever it feels to be most suitable for a given situation."

The first Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Britain's Number One Planner, has decided to fight an election as a moderniser. The echoes (like those of Labour's New Frontiers) are of John F. Kennedy's call in 1960 to "get this nation moving" and the cost of the new initiatives with which the Government has been breaking out all over will clearly be high. The first instinct of the startled Labour Party, which had settled down to pot the fourteenth Earl on his own grouse-moor because of a too easy acceptance of the Macleod theory of the unsaleability of noblemen, was to slip into the mask abandoned by the Tories and say that Sir Alec would spend the country into bankruptcy. The supreme contemporary instance of this debates-contest style of politics comes from the 1960 campaign of ex-Vice-President Richard Nixon. In *Six Crises* Nixon explains that for nine months before the campaign he had been advocating a tough policy against Castro. His view finally prevailed within the Administration. Then Kennedy came out with a policy to aid the Cuban rebels. Nixon explained: "There was only one thing I could do.... I must go to the other extreme: I must attack the Kennedy proposal to provide such aid as wrong and irresponsible because it would violate our treaty commitments."

Nixon's style does not suit James Callaghan and the thought that the economising line might prove rewarding was allowed to pass. Besides, the Government came up brightly with the "growth budget"—the notion that if you plan to have a consistent 4 per cent. increase per year, *and if* (additional premise, usually unstated) you succeed in keeping to the plan, the taxes you start off with will yield a computable amount of additional revenue, so that it is "responsible" to promise increased Government spending up to that amount without proposing matching new taxation.

Observers of transatlantic politics may remember having met this one somewhere before, during its original run. Why, yes, it was the mainstay of Leon Keyserling, President Truman's favourite economic adviser, when he was publishing regular alternative budgets throughout the eight years of the Eisenhower Administration, complete with graphs showing exactly how many billions of dollars of resources, with their corresponding tax yield, had gone to waste because of the failure of the economy to grow at its optimum rate. Keyserling's approach was regarded in the States at the time as being just as far as you could go to the left in American politics without being seriously charged with Communist subversion.

Hugh Gaitskell had a go at it during the 1959 election but made what he came to realise was the serious mistake of dramatising the calculation by undertaking formally not to raise the income tax during the next Parliament. This shattered the "responsibility" image. Economic journalists invented the rule that what they advise, although sound sense and good for the country, will be poison for politicians, because painful and thus vote-losing. Tom Kent, Lester Pearson's economic adviser in his unsuccessful first campaign as Canadian Liberal leader, refined the rule in action. Economists' economically sound advice to politicians will also be disastrous for them if the electors find it too unexpectedly pleasant. On perfectly legitimate grounds, Kent talked Pearson into proposing a PAYE tax holiday: voters were appalled at the sight of such a crude bonanza. They felt insulted and bucked away. In 1959 Gaitskell had not absorbed that lesson.

But, such is the progress of ideas when the facts that support them are inexorable, that

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what was considered to need dramatisation by the Opposition in 1959 is treated as received opinion by the Government in 1964. The cant word now is "costed." Tory promises are responsible because they have been "carefully costed" (as every Conservative candidate said in recent by-elections) to fit in under the Keyserling-type curve. (Dare anyone whisper that the Ferranti contract was costed also?) Labour promises are irresponsible because not costed. One wonders whether this adaptation of the "responsibility" argument is not a little too clever.

A FIRST REACTION to a diet of these five pamphlets may well be to adapt Mort Sahl: "Harold Wilson stands for moderation, Douglas-Home for the middle of the road. If only we could find a compromise between these two extremes." Yet there is nothing unusual about the interpenetration of ideas between parties in continuous debate, each having a reasonable hope of winning the next round. For one thing there are *three* stages in the dialectic, not *two*: through synthesis one gets forward movement. Otherwise everything would stay as it is and the argument be sterile. Life itself, as the Communists put it—or more prosaically the dependence on the export trade of an island with a large population which is increasing faster and for much longer than the Beveridge projections expected and is demanding to take up as much space in housing, transport and leisure as the most prosperous of peoples in a less dense land—forces the mutation of party principles. They are not however abruptly abandoned. As Wallas said, "the indifferent and half attentive mind which most men turn towards politics is like a slow photographic plate. He who wishes to be clearly photographed must stand before it for a long time. A bird that flies across the plate leaves no mark." There are fashions in political ideas, which at each election inject new "issues," in the sense not of fresh points in which the parties can be crisply divided but of new subject matter on which they all feel obliged, for the purposes of being "with it," to express some, often very similar, opinions. Youth and Beauty were the great discoveries of the 1959 election—a party was not a party that had nothing to say about them. Science and the Humanisation of the Health Service, which had a mention then, have usurped their place in 1964.

Then again, "issues" that have been kicked around for years by a few enthusiasts suddenly by some mysterious process ripen for action in a particular year. Dr. Thomas Balogh has been publishing tract after tract about the dangers of our cult of the amateur and the all-rounder, especially in the civil service, for at least a decade; suddenly all seem agreed.

WHEN AS A YOUNG SUBALTERN I listened to the election results of 1945 in an officers' mess, the major came in slowly, slumped down, a study in misery, and said very stagily: "I feel now as I felt on September 3rd, 1939: that anything might happen." The colonel followed, face drawn, voice weary. "I suppose I shall be sent down to work in the mines." Gladstone's election victory in 1892 filled Queen Victoria with horror at the need to put "that dreadful fanatic" in charge of her Empire, and in 1924 hysterical efforts were made to get Asquith to save the country by doing Labour out of their first chance. It does not seem likely that if there is a Left victory in October, it will have anything like the same panicky effect on so many nerves. The consensus has been moving towards the Left and the Labour Party has gone to some considerable trouble to qualify itself as an inheritor—that is, a Government capable of engaging the emotional loyalty of people well outside its basic doctrinal range.

For all the resemblances of words, the tone of the rival pamphlets is markedly different. Raison, Goldman, and Goodhart, the Tory trio, do not write like people with the bit between their teeth. Raison in fact writes like someone asked to produce an essay on a huge and boring subject who has jotted down a list of topics that must be mentioned to show that he has not forgotten them. He sniffs at them, lingers a moment and ambles on. Both he and Goodhart take a remote, detached view of the subject which their leader, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, regards as the issue of issues: Britain's nuclear deterrent. "British Foreign Secretaries earn their place in the highest conference chambers because of their diplomatic skill and the wisdom of their policy," remarks Goodhart, waspishly. "They do not sit there because of the existence of a nuclear arsenal." Raison evidently feels the same. The outside possibility of a Barry Goldwater or a Henry Wallace being elected President of the United States is the main reason he can think of for Britain retaining a deterrent. The strength of the military case for keeping it must depend on "an assessment of America's political maturity" and if it were possible to reach an effective agreement by which such weapons could be confined to the U.S. and Russia "we might well be ready to give up our own."

The Conservative writers are, curiously enough, considerably cooler on the Common Market than their opponents. Raison thinks dimly of the enthusiastic Macmillan/Heath

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assessment of Britain's negotiating position at Brussels at the point at which De Gaulle cut us off—"I believe," writes Goodhart, "that even if President de Gaulle had not broken off the negotiations in January, 1963, we should have ultimately found the terms attainable irreconcilable with our pledges." Jim Northcott, who has been advancing sturdily, stodgily through a digest of party policy statements until this point, takes up on Europe a much more radical line than his present or late leader.

> In a few years' time things could be very different... if we were joining not just a halfway house but a full economic union with a common currency and supranational economic planning the opportunities might indeed be exciting... but these economic advantages could not safely be secured without a much closer political union.

He advocates a merger of sovereignties in a democratic Federation.

In his early chapters Raison empties Quintin Hogg's enthusiastic definitions of Conservative principle of practically their entire content; he can scarcely conceal that he regards the slogan of "One Nation" as little more than a fake. It is derived, he says, from Disraeli's phrase about two nations which "was only a romantic notion," even then; and in any case "the doctrine of One Nation is not easy to uphold in practice"—a conclusion he is unkind enough to Conservative Ministers to document.

At first sight Peter Goldman's tract offers stronger election meat. Certainly he works himself into quite a pet against the Opposition from time to time. But the rhetorical bits seem stuck on after the rest was finished, bearing no organic relation to the basically dispassionate tone, which, as Mr. Enoch Powell has observed in a notice of this among other Tory pamphlets, might belong to any party or to none. There are the worthwhile suggestions for brightening up the social services which Mr. Powell noted. Yet there is also an air of intellectual frivolity in the false antitheses and facile debating points (usually introduced by the first person ponderous—"I do not want to treat this notion too cavalierly.... But with the best will in the world I cannot see why... I am driven to the conclusion that... There have been times when it has been scarcely possible to restrain one's indignation when..."). It serves to cover the absence of any serious attempt to re-think the contemporary Conservative approach to welfare, to produce an analysis which would make sense of the readiness to use certain devices while considering others out of court.

Why are some conservative principles no longer considered operative while others inhibit action which on pragmatic grounds would seem desirable?

> Even the existing diluted safeguards for property are all too often incompatible with decent planning or replanning of towns and cities, thanks to the very high price of land in some areas [Raison tells us]. Yet although many Conservatives are appalled at the squalid way in which many British towns are evolving, they are too impressed by the rights of property ... to be able to accept... the view that the community, rather than the individual owner, should benefit from rises in property values.

Now, there may be a good reason in equity or logic why this should be, but after so much emotional air has been let out of old tyres the discriminating voter is surely going to ask: "Why stop there? Why suddenly after being *appalled* at such *squalor*, choke on the principle of property rights when you have offered no analysis of contemporary society or of conservative thought which suggests that these rights should have an absolute quality when you have allowed so much else to erode?"

Goodhart's offering, which specialises in foreign affairs, is in many ways the best of the Tory three, just as Peter Pulzer (with his splendid knife job on the new Jingoism of the Left which believes that the world is waiting with baited breath for Britain to assume the White Man's burden of moral leadership) makes the foreign affairs chapter one of the most rewarding in the *New Frontiers* symposium. The trouble with Goodhart is that in the middle of a tract packed with sensible discussion, including much very reasonable defence of his Government's policies, one suddenly has to ask whether he can be serious. He throws in the astonishing suggestion that, as a new initiative, Britain should invite the Common Market to join the European Free Trade Area with the Commonwealth countries associated as well. To be fair there is more than a hint of the same fantasy in the obscure paragraph with which Northcott finishes his chapter on "economic expansion" in the Labour Penguin. But Goodhart is an active Tory backbencher; he travels around; during the prolonged dialogue with the Six did he not hear *anything* that they had to say?

THE TORY PAMPHLETS are unmistakably individual efforts: the qualities and defects of the Labour Penguin are much more those of the published party policy. This in itself gives it importance as evidence in the transmission of ideas. It cannot be by chance that the millennial aspects of socialism, the main subject matter of so much

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literature, are down to two sentences in a book of 164 pages. They read:

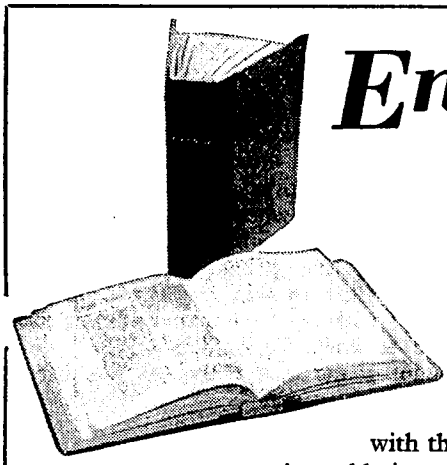
> These basic socialist principles imply a goal of a good society so different from the one we have at present that we cannot hope to reach it without changes far more radical than those discussed in this book. What these changes should be and how they should be accomplished we cannot with certainty foresee in any detail.

This is indeed a vestigial tail.

But for comparing like with like one needs to go more to Peter Hall's workshop, the majority of whose members have been actively engaged as experts in helping to advise the Labour Party. There is also one American contributor, Edward Shils, the only one of the writers under review who, possessing elegance of thought and distinction of style, can be read for pleasure. The New Frontiersmen unquestionably give much more of an impression than their Tory opposites of making a dry run for a term of office. But there is a pervading air of apparently well-founded worry about how much they will be able to pull off in the course of their "first term." For a start there is the daunting fact (which would also face the Douglas-Home planners if returned) that the whole edifice of general and regional economic planning, growth budgeting, radical social reform, scientific overhaul of industry etc. must rest on one giant and sustained act of completely voluntary co-operation which the Government cannot legislate into existence. This act is agreement, frequently renewed and constantly under multiple strain, between Government, Unions and Employers over an Incomes Policy. As John Corina recognises, this

> does involve wholesale change in union attitudes. It involves recognising that genuine solidarity of union action and policy scarcely exists and needs to be built up. This leads straight to the case for a reorganisation of union structure.

This is clearly not going to happen in five minutes. And, since incomes policy requires the willing co-operation of employers also (and their internal dragooning to follow the tripartite line), the opportunities are somewhat limited for taking the ritual swipes at businessmen which are traditionally considered necessary if the unions are to make "sacrifices" of their convenience. Indeed cajoling, hectoring, entreating or sticking pins under their friends is clearly, from these accounts, going to occupy the main energies of a Wilson Government. Not only must the unions be made to take



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TUC discipline so that the TUC can negotiate binding wages (or earnings) deals every year, but the bottom has got to be blown out of the unions' cherished apprenticeship traditions if the socialist plans to make private enterprise efficient are to get anywhere.

THE QUESTION OF the time schedule haunts Labour's New Frontiers from Christopher Foster's early chapter on economic policy to Peter Hall's rather desperate epilogue. Foster dismisses the argument that planning must start with administrative or educational reforms. The results of such policies, good in themselves, will simply take too long to work through the system. Industry must become efficient *now*, during the next Parliament.

Foster's own scheme is a compulsory annual efficiency audit for all public companies, which is an interesting thought but is it all that quick? He admits that a new profession of efficiency auditors will have to be organised; the whole procedure, with its complex problems of value judgment, looks as if it could take a whole Parliament to set into motion. And by the next chapter we are with Corina and the total overhaul of the trade union structure. Something of the same theme crops up throughout the symposium: the country may be equipped to handle Labour policies by 1970 but scarcely before. But Labour will only get its second term if well before 1969 there is already some of that extra confidence for the businessman, that free classless feeling for the workers, those better markings on the international league tables.

In his concluding chapter Hall says that Labour will "have colossal difficulty" in coming up to promise during the first term "for a simple reason: there are not the people in the country capable of doing the job." In an example from his own field of town planning he writes:

> Planning demands the union in teams of a host of separate skills and disciplines—those of the geologist, the geographer, the economist, the valuer, the sociologist, the architect. None of these skills exists in adequate supply at present: some of them hardly exist at all.

We are back at the old problem of what Foster calls solutions that "are too profound to be anything but a superficial answer to the next Government's economic difficulties."

Nevertheless the most embarrassing single issue for Labour is not this, nor even the scheme for dealing with land costs for comprehensive planning, which is promised for the first session of the new Parliament, about which no one sounds all that confident, and which has been freely labelled by critics, Timothy Raison among many others, as a foregone fiasco. It is the public schools. The "classless society" is right at the heart of Labour's ethos; socialism means that or it means nothing. "It is the existence of the public and private schools," even Raison has conceded "that illustrates most vividly the potential clash between the principle of freedom and the idea of One Nation. [An impulse to side-swipe the One Nation group being the closest our Tory Penguin ever gets to a faint flush of passion.] ... Certainly an element of unfairness in favour of the public schoolboy is likely to remain for a long time yet."

Can Labour possibly tolerate this a moment longer once it is in power? But maddening though it must be, Labour's brains have produced no convincing answer to the argument of freedom of choice or for that matter those of quality and experimentation. The arguments for and against the public schools do not really meet—on the one hand they are about the class system, on the other they are about educational excellence and free choice. Both latter phrases are vogue words in 1964: Labour hardly wants the public school issue to permit the Tories to pre-empt them.

FINALLY, THERE IS a spectre at the electoral word-feast. It is the spectre of Meritocracy. Everyone is scared by it: it seems like a class division more sinister than any we have ever known. The pamphleteers mention the word briefly to show they know it and then run shivering away. Could it be to this that our new national consensus of efficiency is leading us? It is perhaps in a desperate effort to fend off the menace that Northcott thus sums up the Labour case:

> If one man is good at engineering, if another is good at growing roses, if another man is good at a party and if another man is good to his wife and children, who is to say that one is better than another in any sense that is meaningful and useful?

Now, where did we meet that, long ago? It is the credo of the American Education Association almost to the word. A century and more ago the United States was the model for British radicals, who stressed above all its classlessness, its democracy, and its public education. Then disenchantment set in. Perhaps the wheel has now gone full circle. We have our last Titoist slogan for 1964.

"SOCIALISM MEANS AMERICANISM."

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PRESS

Dissent over Cuba

That community is already in the process of dissolution where each man begins to eye his neighbour as a possible enemy, where nonconformity with the accepted creed, political as well as religious, is a mark of disaffection; where orthodoxy chokes freedom of dissent; where faith in the eventual supremacy of reason has become so timid that we dare not enter our convictions in the open lists, to win or lose.

JUDGE LEARNED HAND (1952)

THE ROLE of the dissenter is not an easy one in the United States. There is something about our civilisation that condemns nonconformity with a vigour and emotionalism that is exceptional in the Western world. When things go wrong, the natural, human need for scapegoats is exaggerated. Since open discussion is a necessary ingredient in any society, the effort to suppress or reduce it—even though it be an unconscious effort—is self-defeating.

The differences, for instance, between the United States and Latin American nations—differences in history, traditions, customs, character, religion, legal systems, economic and political structures—are so great that the North American cannot truly understand the Latin American. If, nevertheless, the United States citizen insists on applying his own yardsticks to events and people below the Rio Grande, he cannot avoid being critical or, at best, frustrated.

In the case of the Cuban Revolution, United States opinion (I speak here of the consensus of opinion) has been intensely emotional and, for a number of well-known reasons, intensely hostile. As a result, those who seek to be objective, even though critical and regretful, who explain the Cuban case, who describe events, condemning some and praising others, who see what is good as well as bad, who think and write of Fidel Castro as an extraordinary human being who also has good and bad elements in him—those who seek to do all this are treated as "bad Americans," at best incredibly naïve and stupid, at worst crypto-Communists.

It has been an interesting experience to be the victim of this state of affairs and to see an honoured institution like the New York *Times* under attack for carrying out a journalistic service for which it deserves—and will in time get—praise. This study in dissension is presented here for its historic value. I do not feel that self-defence is necessary to my argument, and still less self-pity in a controversy that has had more personal satisfactions than annoyances, but it seems legitimate in this case to argue from the particular to the general.

There is a special reason for considering the subject impassively because the Cuban Revolution is a Latin American phenomenon that has had a tremendous impact on Western hemispheric affairs. It has also become a part of the global cold war, although it cannot be considered solely in cold war terms.

THERE IS A general belief among students of Latin American affairs that revolutionary upheavals of a more profound nature than military *coups d'état* are likely to come in some of the Latin American countries during this decade. How will the United States react? The experience with the Cuban Revolution is far from reassuring. The provocations were great and a conflict between the United States and Cuba, no doubt, unavoidable, but a dissenter cannot assume a self-righteous stance. He must feel that there were right and wrong on both sides; that both made mistakes; that the results in terms of our relationships have been deplorable; that with different attitudes and policies on our part, perhaps—just perhaps—there might have been different and better results.

The Cuban experience should provide a number of lessons for the United States, lessons that might be applied if there were other radical, leftist social revolutions in Latin America. But how are the lessons to be learned if the North American passionately feels that he is entirely right and Fidel Castro and his associates entirely wrong? How can this rigid, narrow, harmful attitude be softened and made more understanding and realistic if the dissenter—or merely, the impartial observer, the student, the historian—is pilloried and even persecuted?

The American academic world is, on the whole, open-minded and objective, so that anyone lecturing at universities or attending conferences is able to speak frankly and freely.

HERBERT L. MATTHEWS *is an editor of the New York* Times, *one of its senior foreign correspondents, and the author of* The Cuban Story *(1961). His views on Castro, Cuba, and Latin American affairs have been frequently criticised in* ENCOUNTER, *especially in Theodore Draper's articles (subsequently published in book form). But his account of his opinions and tribulations, especially in the American context, seems to us a document interesting and important enough to publish and to discuss. (Other views next month.)*

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Scholarly training, plus the authority of knowledge, provides a climate in which the dissenter is heard with whatever respect he deserves. This, however, is not like the milieu in which the journalist, diplomat, politician, or businessman works. Universities are calm oases in a vast and sometimes burning desert; students and professors are a tiny minority of a public moulded by the mass media of communication. The academic world, by its nature and the climate in which it operates, opens its mind, studies and sometimes passes judgment, sometimes waits and sees—but it does not make policy, even when Harvard professors swarm over the White House, and it does not shape contemporary public opinion.

I do not mean to say that American colleges and universities are not without their reactionaries, bigots, toadies, and persecutors of nonconformists. I realise that predatory animals sometimes stray into "the groves of academe," but it is a place where intellectual intolerance is exceptional, where the dissenter is judged on his merits and not condemned because he is a dissenter. The scholarly world would petrify, as in an ice age, if intellectual controversy were banned or treated as a crime. This does happen, of course, in certain fields in totalitarian states.

It tends to happen in the United States. The Cuban Revolution offers a case study in how to be—or become—a dissenter. It shows what can happen (or may happen) to the non-conformist. I would also argue that it shows the perils of an imposed conformity.

SO FAR as the historic background is pertinent, the important thing to keep in mind is that the dictatorship of General Fulgencio Batista (1952–1959) in Cuba was tyrannous, cruel, predatory, and corrupt. There were a number of Cubans and American businessmen who would have quarrelled with this description at the time, but they were proportionately few. The Cuban opposition to Batista was strong and widespread, although the activists, naturally, were a tiny minority.

The resistance was loosely organised in the 26th of July Movement which, being named for the date on which Fidel Castro led the attack against the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba in 1953, had its links with him. Yet, it was not known for a while whether Fidel Castro was alive or dead. I demonstrated that he was alive by going up to see him in the Sierra Maestra and publishing an interview with him in February, 1957. (The circumstances were fully related in my book, *The Cuban Story*.)

A straightforward journalistic assignment was immediately transformed into a political event, charged with meaning and direction—on the one hand the wild enthusiasm of the anti-Batistianos who saw it as a deliberate effort to aid their cause and exalt Fidel Castro; on the other hand, the fury and disgust of President Batista and his followers who saw it as a deliberate effort to help overthrow their Government, with the additional belief that the *Times* story was false. Perhaps it should be added that a shock of anxiety went through the American business community, which was happy with the status quo and stability, as was the Pentagon, for obvious reasons.

It should be noticed, for the record, that the Cuban Communist Party—the *Partido Socialista Popular*—was critical of Fidel Castro and his efforts; the Communists helped Batista passively and at times actively, and they were antipathetic to the vague, confused, amateurish, but decidedly liberal ideas that Fidel Castro expressed—and believed—at the time.

The Batista régime—Army and Government—disintegrated. The civic resistance, including the middle and upper classes (really one in Cuba), the well-to-do, the intellectuals, played a major role in undermining the morale of the Army and Government. However, the symbol around which the entire opposition rallied was Fidel Castro, and the *coup de grâce* was delivered by him and his small guerrilla force. Thus, when Fidel entered Havana on January 8, 1959, he was a hero not only to Cubans, but to North Americans.

THE ROLE OF the dissenter in the United States began very quickly at the time of the summary executions of the "Batistiano criminals." This was before the end of Castro's first month in power. Virtually all Cubans approved or accepted the executions as necessary, but for an American to express understanding and to make the point that the trials and executions, however contrary to the normal traditions of Anglo-Saxon legality, were rough justice and a sensible method of preventing mob violence and private vengeance was considered outrageous. The executions could only be understood in the light of Cuban history, character, and psychology.

One of the true but popularly unacceptable and evidently shocking things to be said about the Cuban upheaval to this date is that, as such revolutions go, it has been singularly unbloodthirsty and mild. Batista probably killed five or ten times as many Cubans in the last few years of his régime as Castro in more than five years. If revolutions like those in France, Mexico, and Russia, for instance, are taken as examples of modern social revolutions, Cuba's has thus far been a picnic in comparison—at least when it comes to blood-letting.

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A detailed account of the course of American public opinion and the defection of the Cuban middle and upper classes is unnecessary here. One need only point out that any American presenting the Cuban revolutionary case, even with strong criticisms, arguing against the mistaken belief in the United States that Fidel Castro and his associates were always Communists, pointing to what was good as well as bad about the Revolution, trying to retain some objectivity—such a person became suspect.

It is important to note that American hostility long antedated the 1962 missile crisis. The reasons for American fear, anger, and distrust (especially since October, 1962) are overwhelming, but the knowledge acquired then should not be projected backward to 1959–61, when different situations obtained. The nuclear missile bases were not an inevitable development; they were a desperate gamble taken by Khrushchev and Castro in mid-1962. Premier Castro insisted to me, when I saw him in Havana on 29th October, 1963, that the missiles were purely "defensive" and that, incidentally, the idea to install them was his, not the Russians. This was nothing to boast about, and to cite Castro is not to approve of what he said, but it is the sort of datum that belongs in any true history.

The missile crisis episode, our present crisis with Panama, the relations of Castroism to Zanzibar, Algeria, Ghana, and elsewhere, do not relieve anybody of the duty of considering the Cuban Revolution and its leaders with as much objectivity and understanding as can be mustered. A doctor's scientific treatment of a disease does not mean approval of the disease. On the contrary, he wants to see his patient healthy, and he is not blamed for the illness. Yet a journalist who diagnosed (*i.e.*, described) the Cuban Revolution in a certain way was accused, or suspected, of favouring what was happening. Readers or radio and television listeners believed (in fact, wanted to believe) the worst about Cuba long before it became as bad as they thought. The result of this type of approach was to bring about, or to hasten, this "worst," and that is what can happen whenever a leftist revolutionary situation develops or threatens in Latin America or anywhere else in the world.

WHATEVER one wants to think about Cuban events, the misinterpretations, distortions, misunderstandings, and deliberate falsifications that characterised newspaper, radio, and television coverage of the revolution, both in the U.S. and in Cuba, were harmful.

There was a partial parallel to this situation throughout Latin America, mainly because the newspapers there did not have their own correspondents in Cuba and relied upon the Associated Press, United Press International, and the slightly better but less used Agence France Presse. Another factor in Latin America was the natural hostility of the newspaper owners, who belong to the governing classes and who feared Castro-type revolutions in their own countries. Nevertheless, there was naturally more understanding of what was essentially a Latin American phenomenon, as well as a far greater amount of popular, intellectual, and nationalistic sympathy for Fidel Castro and what he was doing.

The Cuban Revolution, in many respects, carried hemispheric developments to extremes, including a polarisation of political sentiments. In the communications field it brought on the most resounding failure of U.S. journalism in decades. It stimulated an emotional reaction that has had few precedents in U.S. history.

It would be easy at this point to get lost in the depths of human psychology and behaviour. There is nothing new about the intense emotionalism, the inflexibility of mind, the blind certainty, the fear, the hatred, the intolerance, the ruthlessness of American public opinion on the Cuban Revolution in general and Fidel Castro in particular. Communism is a heresy; it is not simply a political and economic system, worked out in the 20th century on Rousseauist-Marxist bases; it is something positively and morally evil; in short, it is a sin. The Cuban Revolution, it seems, has made a hell out of Cuba and Fidel Castro is its devil. Simple stereotypes of the Communist and of communism are usually drawn without distinctions. The world of reality has its Khrushchev, Mao Tse-tung, Tito, Gomulka, Cheddi Jagan, Hanga, and Fidel Castro, with all their differences in character, and all the differences induced by national traits, customs, traditions, interests, and aims. The American mass media, instead, tend to create a fantastic world. The picture they draw is a response to a predisposed public opinion which is both satisfied and moulded by it. Congressmen are a part of this public. Most of them respond to popular pressures. Those who are more sophisticated, more mature in their thinking and less demagogic, are handicapped in an era that is stirred by the emotions of fear and outrage.

Once this picture, or something like it, is accepted, it becomes a form of heresy to disagree with the prevailing opinion. It is like saying that you are not "against sin." You have to be a true believer, otherwise, as the Bible says, "because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

If there is a sin in these matters it is intolerance. The problem of public discussion of controversial subjects cannot be simplified into one

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of truth and falsity, right and wrong. The polemical question, essentially, is whether one is entitled to express an opinion different from the consensus without being a victim of painful accusations or even, in some cases, loss of job or the ruin of a career.

So FAR AS Cuba and the revolutionary trends in Latin America are concerned, there is an even greater problem, in my opinion. There is such a thing as "quarrelling with history." Events sometimes move like the tides. If Uncle Sam emulates the King Canute of Danish legend and orders the tide not to come in, the result is frustration. This is not an argument that whatever the Castro Government did or does must be accepted unprotestingly. It is an argument that there are trends in Latin America which, like the irresistible drive of the African colonies for independence, must be met with understanding and accommodation. Panama is presenting the United States with such a problem in 1964.

The United States, up to a point, is also responding to a historic drive as inexorable as the tides. One might well say that Americans cannot act differently. Liberal democracy has no more excluded irrationality from human and national behaviour than communism, fascism, or any other political system. The historian of the future, in whom some of us take a doubtless pathetic comfort, can be more rational than we about the Cuban Revolution, for it will be a time, to quote R. H. Tawney in another context, "in which passion has cooled into curiosity, and the agonies of peoples have become the exercise in the schools." That day is one of humanity's will o' the wisps, for it is always somewhere in the unattainable and unknowable future for any generation. Meanwhile no free, open, acceptable dialogue is possible in the United States on the subject of Cuba; there are no two sides; no bases for argument; no way of reaching intermediate or different positions. Still less can a man stand aside and look at Cuba as a historic phenomenon, judiciously, objectively.

A generation living through a historic process, especially those who suffer from its consequences, naturally feels a sense of protest. The victims resent what has happened, and think of all the better things (from their point of view) that might or should have happened. They seek reasons outside of themselves and—in the case of Cuba and Fidel Castro—cry: "Betrayal!"

MANY WHO LOOK for an explanation that satisfies and exculpates them will paradoxically fall back on a supposed inevitability, a pattern, a blueprint which derives from a simple, understandable case. In the case of Cuba, it amounts to the rationalising of a phenomenon that has been irrational, unplanned, opportunistic, responsive to powerful and uncontrollable forces inside and outside of Cuba. This was especially true of the turn towards communism, or Marxism-Leninism.

The leader of the school of thought that has seen a planned purposiveness in the development of the Cuban Revolution is Theodore Draper.* His work is always impressive because of its honesty and the accuracy of the facts presented. The weakness of his original approach lay in the selectivity of the facts and the failure or inability to take human factors sufficiently into account—for instance, the extraordinarily complex, emotional, undisciplined character of Castro. A situation like the Cuban Revolution cannot be understood by a long-distance exercise in cerebration, however brilliant.

So far as the Cuban Revolution was concerned, it has never sufficed to offer a series of government decrees, statements, speeches, and newspaper or magazine articles as if they represented a carefully planned progression or a complete structure. Revolutions of the Cuban type are not susceptible to argumentative constructions that belong to the technique of totalitarian, "scientific" thought or the school of Kremlinology. Those who use or accept this method would better have kept in mind what J. L. Talmon, one of the most penetrating contemporary analysts of the French Revolution, wrote in *Political Messianism*:

> The most awe-inspiring lesson of the French Revolution was not that men with their deliberating reason can make a revolution, but that the revolution plays havoc with men. . . . Robespierre, Colot d'Herbois, or Barère never dreamt of establishing a Revolutionary government or a reign of terror. They were driven to it irresistibly like somnambulists.

Crane Brinton, in his classic study on *The Anatomy of Revolution*, makes the same point.

The arguments about Fidel Castro "betraying" the Revolution by his embrace of Marxism-Leninism are good polemics for the U.S. State Department and the Cuban exiles, but they are bad history. Castro always had radical social revolutionary ideas but, as he explained to me, he thought for a long time that they could be carried out in a relatively democratic framework. In struggling with the real problems of making his revolution, after coming to power, he decided that he could not do it under a liberal democratic system, and he believed that his answers were to be found in Marxism.

A misinterpretation of his famous speech of

* *Castro's Revolution*. By THEODORE DRAPER. (Pall Mall Press, London; and Praeger, New York.)

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December 2nd, 1961 ("I am a Marxist-Leninist") which was compounded by an inexcusable distortion in the version put out by the United Press International, led to the belief that he had confessed he was a Communist from university days. This version has gone into "history," although it has been thoroughly demolished for serious students and historians by a number of authorities. (See ENCOUNTER, July, 1962.)

The whole question of Fidel Castro's communism provides a case study in itself of the distortions and misunderstandings that have bedevilled Cuban-American relations and American public opinion all along. In the process, the dissenter, who disbelieved the accepted version or even just doubted it, was given a rough time.

It is not necessary here to argue the case against the prevailing belief. Fidel Castro, when I saw him last October, gave me a long, thoughtful account of his slow progress towards Marxism-Leninism. For our purposes, it should suffice that someone who believes that Castro embraced communism (or what he calls "Marxism-Leninism") well after his assumption of power has a basis for his argument. Since fate decreed that I, so to speak, should be Public Dissenter Number One, it may be of interest to see what happened.

I HAD AT ALL TIMES argued, as I still do, that Fidel was not a Communist and did not become one until well after the Revolution got under way. My guess for his "conversion" to Marxism-Leninism was mid-1960, which he told me last October was as good a date as any.

However, things had been happening in Cuba that gave colour to the belief that Fidel, and more surely his brother, Raúl Castro, and Ernesto "Ché" Guevara, were Communists. A long series of events—the executions, the agrarian reform, the statements of defectors and counter-revolutionaries, the undoubtedly growing strength of the Cuban Communists, the trade agreements with the Soviet Union, the seizure of the oil refineries and, later, of other American properties, the speeches, the missions behind the Iron Curtain and to Communist China—all these became, in the end, a progression towards communism.

At what precise point it could be said that the Castro régime was Communist in a formal sense is still debatable. Castro, himself, cannot say. It depended, in part, on one's definition of communism. My own definition of a Communist, until recently, was a person who belonged to a Communist party and took orders from it, and from Moscow or Peking.

On July 26th, 1961, Fidel announced the forthcoming creation of a "Unified Party of the Socialist Revolution of Cuba" from which time the régime was openly communistic. On December 2nd, 1961, came that speech in which Castro proclaimed that he was a Marxist-Leninist and would always be one. This ended the debate, but it did not mean that the previous history of the Revolution was therefore to be re-written.

All through this process, American public opinion, Congress, the American business world, the press, radio, and television, were getting more and more furious with Fidel Castro and the Revolution. By the same token, they were getting more furious with me and two State Dept. officials who were chosen as scapegoats.

THE TECHNIQUE at all times in pillorying the dissenter is to start from the contemporary situation and then claim that: "We were misled!" Those who believe so then debate whether the person or persons who supposedly did the misleading, did so inadvertently (*i.e.*, were fools) or deliberately (in which case they were crypto-Communists). This simple explanation of one of the most complex historic phenomena of modern times was understandable and satisfying to the American public and to many Congressmen. It is human nature to seek scapegoats after a defeat. Shooting the general who loses the battle, whether it was his fault or not, is often considered desirable, *"pour encourager les autres."*

In political matters the process is never desirable, because the punishment achieves nothing and is based on false or oversimplified judgments. The three principal scapegoats in the Cuban affair, as is well known, are myself, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Wieland, and former Assistant Secretary of State Roy R. Rubottom, Jr. So far as Wieland and Rubottom are concerned, I will do no more here than repeat what I have written and said on a number of occasions. It has been a travesty of justice and truth to have pilloried two loyal and conscientious public servants and to have wrecked their diplomatic careers. We did not work together; I do not believe they were especially influenced by me and, in fact, I generally found myself in disagreement with them on the State Department's policies towards Batista and Castro. In my opinion, their policies, on balance, favoured Batista and hampered Castro. I am convinced that this will be the verdict of history.

The record, in my case, dates from the original interview I had with Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra on February 17th, 1957, which was published in the New York *Times* a week later. This was discussed in typical fashion by the last two United States Ambassadors to the Batista Government—Arthur Gardner and Earl E. T. Smith—at hearings before the Senate Sub-committee on Internal

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Security, August 27th and 30th, 1960. These are some pertinent passages:

MR. GARDNER: Well, did you read the article that Matthews wrote, after he went up in the hills and saw him [Castro]?

SENATOR DODD: Yes.

MR. GARDNER: He wrote a Richard Harding Davis type of article, and he made Castro appear to be a Robin Hood, a saviour for the country....

SENATOR DODD: Mr. Gardner, do you feel that Matthews' accounts of his visit to Castro, as he wrote it up, had considerable influence on the American people with respect to favouring Castro?

MR. GARDNER: I don't think there is any question about it. I think almost all the newspapers in this country became sort of hypnotised by the thing....

SENATOR DODD: Do you think that Matthews' stories about Castro affected the State Department's thinking about Castro?

MR. GARDNER: I can't think of any other possible cause for their thinking what they thought.

When Ambassador Smith testified three days after Mr. Gardner, he was questioned by J. B. Sourwine, chief counsel,

MR. SMITH: The individual who presided over the Cuban desk in himself is not important, I don't think, in what you are trying to arrive at. I would say that Mr. Wieland and all those who had anything to do with Cuba had a close connection with Herbert Matthews. I will go further than that. I will say that when I was Ambassador, that I was thoroughly aware of this, and sometimes made the remark in my own Embassy that Mr. Matthews was more familiar with the State Department thinking regarding Cuba than I was....

MR. SMITH: I have been asked many times what part, if any, the United States played in the Castro and Communist rise to power in Cuba. The United States Government agencies and the United States press played a major role in bringing Castro to power. Three front page articles in the New York *Times* in early 1957, written by the editorialist Herbert Matthews, served to inflate Castro to world stature and world recognition. Until that time, Castro had been just another bandit in the Oriente Mountains of Cuba, with a handful of followers who had terrorised the *campesinos*, that is the peasants, throughout the countryside....

After the Matthews articles which followed an exclusive interview by the *Times* editorial writer in Castro's mountain hide-out and which likened him to Abraham Lincoln, he was able to get followers and funds in Cuba and in the United States. From that time on arms, money, and soldiers of fortune abounded. Much of the American press began to picture Castro as a political Robin Hood....

Thus, the guilt—one might say, the original sin—is fixed. These passages are cited because they are typical of a now general point of view. They are also typical of the mechanism of a campaign.

It is worth noting that the historian will be looking for other things. He will want to know: was the interview accurate? was the interpretation justified? If Herbert Matthews had not gone up into the Sierra Maestra would not someone else have gone, and if so, how much difference would that have made? Was the situation such in Cuba that the Batista régime was doomed? Could anyone else have played the role that Fidel Castro played? And so on.

My mythical historian, I presume, will also take the trouble to ascertain that I never, in writing or speech, referred to Fidel Castro as a Robin Hood, nor did I ever liken him to Abraham Lincoln. In referring to the belief that Fidel Castro was an invention of the New York *Times*, the Hispanic American Report of Stanford University said: "This is as absurd as blaming a meteorologist for a thunderstorm."

HOWEVER, to have committed the crime of inventing Fidel Castro would not, in itself, have made me a dissenter. I could have confessed my sins, repented, and made amends, as a certain number of American journalists did. After all, 90 to 95 per cent of the Cuban people were more enthusiastic about Fidel Castro than I and many of them changed their minds. To me Fidel was a hopeful phenomenon, although wild, amateurish, and dangerous to the United States, as I wrote and said in lectures as early as the summer of 1959. To Cubans he was an idol whom they worshipped. A lot of these Cubans repented, so to speak.

I did not. This is what makes a dissenter. I, and many sympathisers like me, have been disappointed, disillusioned in some respects, highly critical of many aspects of the Revolution, and deeply sorry for the suffering that the Revolution has caused the Cuban people.

However, I—and some others—remain completely convinced that Fidel Castro and his close associates were not, at first, Communists, and that they led the Revolution into the Communist camp long after it began for a complicated series of reasons and—to me—mistaken judgments, Although they have been making such a mess, I believe that they are trying to achieve an essentially Cuban social revolution and are now correcting the many abuses of the past. I believe that they have already achieved positive results in the field of education, child welfare, medical care, and sanitation. They have made the first honest administration since Columbus discovered the island. They have abolished the previous racial discrimination against Negroes and mulattoes. There has been an agrarian reform, which has been a dismal

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failure to date, but which has broken up the socially and economically bad pattern of the past and which holds the promise of improvement from now on.

Opinions like these are heresy; yet they simply amount to saying that while there is much that is bad about the Cuban Revolution there is also much that is good. The American picture is black; the true picture is black, grey, and white.

AT EACH POINT in this discussion it must be obvious that the U.S. attitude towards the Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro has its application towards the whole of Latin America. Every student of the region is agreed that revolutionary pressures are strong in a number of countries. What the U.S. is saying openly is that we will not countenance such revolutions if they take a Cuban (*i.e.*, Marxist-Leninist) form. But what is communism in North American eyes? Fidel Castro and his régime were labelled as Communists long before they embraced Marxism-Leninism. Perhaps there is nothing the U.S. could have done to prevent this "conversion." Conceivably there may be no other way for an underdeveloped nation to make the quick and drastic social and economic reforms required, except by totalitarian, socialistic methods (or, at least, as Robert Heilbroner writes in *The Great Ascent,* "the price of development is apt to be political and economic authoritarianism"). As President Kennedy said, the United States still has an "unfulfilled task" to prove that social reforms and economic development can be made by democratic and evolutionary methods.

The issues are not clear; the choices are not clean-cut; the trends are not inevitable. Moreover, so far as Cuba is concerned, they never were. The Cuban Revolution has been a shifting, developing, opportunistic chain of events. Like all true revolutions, it was not a single event or incident; it was and is a process. The French Revolution was not the fall of the Bastille or the Reign of Terror; it was the whole complex of internal and European developments from 1789 to 1815. The world is still living with the developments started in 1789. The stage that the French Revolution reached in 1793 (the year of the Terror) was not the same as 1789. The stage the Cuban Revolution has reached five years after 1959 is different from what it was in the first year. This is true of any of the years since 1959.

In my case, for instance, I wrote in July, 1959, that "this is not a Communist revolution in any sense of the word and there are no Communists in positions of control.... Premier Castro is not a Communist, but decidedly anti-Communist." (I had it in mind that by character and temperament he was a perfect Anarchist.)

At the time that was written it was true. This means that it will always be true—for that period. A year later, Fidel Castro himself was proclaiming his intention to carry the revolution into the "socialist" (*i.e.*, communistic) camp. On December 2nd, 1961, he made his proclamation of Marxism-Leninism until "the day I die."

Ever since March, 1959, there has been a growing number of Americans convinced that Castro and his close associates were Communists making a Communist revolution on the model of, and in collusion with, Moscow. The arguments disproving this are convincing, in my opinion, but this is another matter that can be left to the historian.

THE ABUSE heaped upon me and the New York *Times* for taking the contrary position would make an interesting chapter in the chronicles of American journalism. The judgment of history—I have not the slightest doubt—will be on our side. Meanwhile the flood of abuse shows no signs of abating.

Typical messages reaching my office say: "After all, Judas hung himself, why not you?" or "Who do you know that they [the Communists] keep you on their payroll?" A frequent line is intended to assure me that the writers see through my disguise and know that I am a Communist. "I guess that Fidel Castro is not as good a Communist as you are," one letter says. "You will be among the first [underlined twice] to be shot when the Soviets take over the U.S.A.," another assured me, "because you are proving you cannot be trusted to print the truth and the Soviets know it, too. Let's keep America's press honest." "Sooner or later, like Stalin, you will be erased from your Commie-minded grove [*sic*] and mentally cremated by we Americans," a postcard signed: "75 Members of American Legion" told me.

The *Times* long ago began receiving letters expressing astonishment, dismay, and indignation that it could still keep such a dangerous or stupid, and very possibly Communist, editor on its staff. The ability of even a relatively sophisticated readership, such as the American press has, to swallow the wildest stories and ideas is chastening for the serious journalist. The right-wing *National Review*, for instance, put out a clever lampoon for its readers, in which a certain "Sherbert Matthews" was supposed to have sent a "Special to the New York *Times*" from Moscow on May 7th, 1918, beginning: "Communism played no part in last November's Revolution here, and no Communists of any size or stripe held power in the new government."

It was perfectly extraordinary how many

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people, supposedly educated, some high in business or the professions, took the spoof seriously and wrote to the *Times* or me asking how we could have done this or, at the least, asking whether it were true. I prepared a sort of form reply, more or less patiently pointing out that the *National Review* was indulging in a parody and that for my own part, at the time of the supposed despatch, I was barely eighteen, had just enlisted in the American army and was waiting to be sent to France.

The stunt was picked up and taken seriously all over the United States and even turned up a year later in a Madrid weekly. As all writers know, irony is a notoriously risky method, since a certain number of readers will take what one writes literally. In this case, the predisposition to believe the worst was especially interesting.

IT HAS BEEN a baffling feature of Cuban developments that those who were wrong at specific times should have been made to seem right by future events. Thus, those who said from the beginning that Fidel Castro and his close associates were Communists leading Cuba into a Communist revolution seem to have been justified. They point to the situation as it has developed and say: "We told you so!"

The danger in this state of affairs is that they were wrong, and their wrongness undoubtedly contributed towards bringing about the result that they predicted. I was vainly saying throughout 1959 and the first half of 1960 that American hostility and American accusations of Communism were God's gift to the Cuban Communists. We gave them an importance they did not have in the early stages of the Revolution and we built up indignation, recklessness, and sympathy for the Reds among the Cuban revolutionaries. This is not to say that the Revolution was driven into the Communist fold by the American press or U.S. policies, but the process was certainly given an impetus by what we did and said.

With possible revolutionary situations building up in other Latin American countries, this process can be repeated. Those who were wrong in Cuba, but think they were right, will apply the same reasoning in Chile, Argentina, Peru, Panama, Brazil, Ecuador, or wherever.

THE DISSENTER, who in the best of times has a hard lot in the United States, is going to have a still harder one in the future when it comes to Latin America. That is to say, he will have, if American mistakes towards Cuba are repeated elsewhere. The failure that Cuban-American relations present (and surely no one can deny that there has been a failure) has been intensely frustrating and exasperating to American public opinion. Therefore the anger and scorn for those considered responsible for the unsatisfactory state of affairs are all the greater.

The worse Fidel Castro behaved, the more dangerous he became, the more deeply he and Cuba got involved in communism and Communist international affairs, the greater the sin of the villain or villains who presumably brought these things to pass.

If politics were a science, if a course of events could be planned and predicted, if what was good for one nation was good for all, if reason were fully operative and everyone agreed on what was good and desirable, the dissenter would really be unsocial or foolish or evil. Since politics, at its best, is an art, since the forces at work in any given situation are enormously complex, since what is meat for one nation is poison for another, and since there is no agreement on what is good or bad, there will be differences of opinion.

These are platitudes to a student, but neither newspapermen, nor politicians and statesmen operate in an intellectual or philosophical world. They grope their way as best they can through the fog that envelops politics as it does war. They cannot see clearly what is coming. They have no means of controlling or predicting the actions of men who make violent revolutions because such men, with rare exceptions like Lenin and Mussolini, are not men of ideas; they are men of instinct, intuition and, above all, force and a burning ambition for leadership.

To anyone knowing Fidel Castro it was almost ludicrous to see an unsophisticated American public swallow the picture of him as a calculating, trained, subservient Communist applying the rules of scientific Marxism. The same could be said of the sophisticated, Theodore Draper approach which used speeches, statements, decrees, and acts to create a neat mould into which Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution could be poured.

Even to-day, with Fidel a self-proclaimed "Marxist-Leninist," he does not remotely fit either picture. Fidel Castro, it is now recognised, is a Communist *sui generis*. He baffles Nikita Khrushchev as much as he does President Johnson. He does not, however, baffle the great American public, fed by its mass media, its demagogues, and its emotional Cuban guests. They have no doubts; they know; it is all perfectly clear and simple. Fidel Castro, to them, is a bloodthirsty, ruffianly, treacherous Communist. He always was, although he kept it secret. And all Communists are alike.

This is a myth, in the Sorelian sense. It has no more relation to the real Fidel Castro than the picture that the Cuban weekly, *Bohemia*, published in all seriousness and sincerity in

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the summer of 1959, showing Fidel as a Christ with a sort of halo.

THE ARGUMENT I am making, or implying here, is that it ought to be possible to think, talk, and write of Fidel Castro as he is—good, bad, complicated, dangerous, egoistic, idealistic, and very human. Do so, and you are a dissenter in what John Strachey called (ENCOUNTER, December, 1960) "a unanimous country."

The reasons why it is exceptionally difficult to be a dissenter in the United States are complex and lie deep in our history, when the elusive but recognisable American character was formed. In a totalitarian state—Communist or Fascist—dissent is logically and legally a crime; it is a genuine danger to the state or the ruling party. Dissent, as such, has never been a legal crime in the United States; it is a social misdemeanour. It is not, as in Great Britain, an eccentricity that is even enjoyed and encouraged. The dissenter, in the United States, is not even permitted the tolerance of the "lone wolf" or the maverick. He is anti-social; dangerous as well as wrong. He must be morally bad. He is a heretic who will subvert the true believer if he is left to his evil ways.

On fortunately rare occasions in our history, intolerance took the form of governmental oppression. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 have always been our most horrible examples. In modern times we think of the nefarious effects of McCarthyism; and the Cuban Revolution brought on a variation of McCarthyism. Many a newspaperman, broadcaster, and teacher lost his job or had his career ruined through showing sympathy for, or even understanding of, the Cuban Revolution. To be suspected of being "soft on Fidelismo" is worth any American politician's career.

I HAVE BEEN arguing that the issues at stake greatly transcend Cuba and, of course, myself and the New York *Times*. The journalistic problem was aired at the annual conference of the Inter-American Press Association in New York in October, 1961. A resolution was submitted by Cuban exile members criticising me and implying that I should be expelled from the Association—a result that was, in fact, achieved in time despite the loyal and strong stand on my behalf taken by the New York *Times*.

> The issue is not me and not the New York *Times* [I said in a defence]. It is whether an individual has a right to hold and express in his writings ideas that differ from yours—whether a newspaper has a right to express editorial opinions that differ from those of the majority of the IAPA. It is not a question of personalities, but of the right of dissent, not on principles—no one quarrels with the denunciations of the killing of freedom of the press in Cuba. We have had many editorials in the New York *Times* attacking the Castro Government on that subject. No one needs to tell me or the New York *Times* about the evils of communism. We have done our part in this conflict and are still doing it. No one needs to lecture me or the New York *Times* about dictators or dictatorships in Latin America—anywhere in Latin America, even in Cuba.
>
> We [on the *Times*] have a different concept of the historic phenomenon taking place in Cuba than most of you have. We have different ideas about how to combat the Cuban Revolution—and we are opposing it in the way we think best. We have a different approach to communism in Cuba and in Latin America than you. We oppose communism as strongly as any of you, but we have a different conception of how it should be fought. These, essentially, are our only differences.

In all cases, the quarrel is not over principle, and not, in theory, over the idea that everyone is entitled to his own opinion. In United States policy, there is no objection in principle to the idea that revolutions are sometimes necessary and unavoidable.

The trouble comes when an individual dissents against specific, strongly held popular opinions, or when a revolution means, for instance, seizing American property. A revolution in Bolivia, including nationalisation of the tin mines, aroused little emotion or interest in the United States in 1952. Few Americans knew that a revolution was taking place in Bolivia and they would not have cared if they did know.

The Cuban Revolution hurt; it still hurts. Therefore, it is resented. Therefore, there can be no differences of opinion about it unless the man who holds such opinions, as one of our ambassadors in Latin America put it, is "a damn fool or a Communist."

It is really not so simple. There is room for doubt. There is—but, alas, one has to say, there should be—room for dissension.

Herbert L. Matthews

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LETTERS

"Germany"

IT IS STRANGE that an historian of undoubted merit, Professor F. L. Carsten, uses his interesting review of the attempts of his German colleagues to deal with Germany's recent past for making an important statement for which there is no historical evidence, in an aside. Apparently following the fashionable view that the Germans, as a nation, have been perpetual aggressors of their neighbours, he says:

> "These [German researches into Nazi treatment of the Poles] are welcome signs of an understanding of Polish history and Polish suffering, which may help to bring about better relations between two countries *that have been enemies for so long*" [my italics].

An historian, surely, ought to elaborate, if only in one sentence, on such a weighty assertion.

As far as I know, before Hitler attacked Poland, there was, in all the centuries, *one war* between (some) Germans and Poland, culminating in the battle of Grunwald (Tannenberg) in 1410, one famous alliance between Germans (Austrians) and Poland for the defence of Vienna against the Turks (in 1683), entirely peaceful settlement of the original Polish dukedoms of Silesia by Germans over the centuries, a German king of Poland elected by the Polish nobility in the 18th century (Augustus the Strong of Saxony), and Pilsudski's legions fighting on the side of the Germans and the Austrians in World War I. On the debit side, of course, the record was blackened by nationalist border tensions and literary bickering (Gustav Freytag and Heinrich Heine) in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was certainly not the "German nation" which took an active part in dividing up Poland late in the 18th century but the "culprits" were, together with the Russian Tsars, two German monarchs with their bureaucracies and mercenary armies. Ingrained hostility to Poland and the Poles has never been part of the established German political and intellectual tradition, rather lack of interest and knowledge, mainly based on linguistic barriers. At any rate, the German and Austrian rulers of parts of Poland never excelled in such barbarities of anti-Polish oppression as did Tsarism.

With a sense for historical proportions, Professor Carsten, who is a specialist of Prussian and East European history, ought to have compared this record with, for example, the history, torn by many wars, of German-Danish, German-Swedish, German-Italian and, last but not least, German-French relations, and he might have saved himself from unwarranted and unjustified prejudices.

In a similar way, your contributor, Mr. George Steiner, in a purely literary essay, demeans himself by plugging a Communist legend, *viz.*, that "the East Germans have dealt more drastically and honestly with the Nazi past than have the West Germans."

Have the East German Communists abolished—as the Potsdam agreement prescribed—such heirlooms of Nazism as the secret police, imprisonment for political opinions, concentration camps, or anti-Jewish policies (by compensating Jewish victims of the Nazi terror financially, as the Federal Republic has done)? How many ex-Nazis, converted to the red brand of terrorism, serve, or have served, in the Communist German army, the judiciary, and the police? Is there a political party in West Germany, like the East German N.D.P., designed to organise rehabilitated, *i.e.*, "Communised," Nazis as such? Mr. Steiner himself adumbrates that "the truth and summons of conscience" come out of Ulbricht's new Reich only if it suits his propaganda purposes, whilst general publication of Nazi files in East German hands to bring out the full truth is consistently refused by East Berlin. Does Mr. Steiner call such methods drastic and honest?

West German historians, educationalists, and politicians may not have completely succeeded in dealing with the recent German past (*"unbewältigte Vergangenheit"*), but criticism by historians like Professor Carsten and by literary essayists like Mr. Steiner will not help them or the British public to improve their performances in this respect.

HENRY HELLMANN

London

MR. HELLMANN, who accuses me of "unwarranted and unjustified prejudices" (because I stated that Germany and Poland "have been enemies for so long"), is at fault in his historical information as well as in his interpretation of my words. There was not *one war* between (some) Germans and Poland before 1939; after the seizure of Danzig by the Teutonic Knights at the beginning of the 14th century there followed a whole chain of wars, lasting until the early 16th century (the longest of these was the devastating Thirteen Years War from 1454 to 1466 which resulted in the partition of Prussia) because the Poles tried to recover the mouth of the Vistula and their natural outlet to the sea.

My statement, however, was not based on this, rather ancient, history but on the anti-German feelings aroused among the Poles by the partitions of Poland in the late 18th century in which the Kings of Prussia secured for themselves a large slice of the divided country. These feelings were, in the 19th century, very much exacerbated by a determined policy of Germanisation adopted by successive Prussian governments. On this question I can refer Mr. Hellmann to three monographs recently published in West Germany: Martin Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Munich, 1963); Siegfried Baske, *Praxis und Prinzipien der preussischen Polenpolitik vom Beginn der Reaktionszeit bis zur Gründung des Deutschen Reiches* (Berlin and Wiesbaden, 1963); and Rudolf Korth, *Die preussische Schulpolitik und die polnischen*

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Schulstreiks (Würzburg, 1963). They give an untarnished picture of the policy pursued in the Polish provinces, and it was this anti-Polish policy which caused bitter enmity between Germans and Poles.

Nor did matters improve during the inter-war period as the national minorities in both countries continuously complained about victimisation and persecution and the German government and army continued to pursue a strongly anti-Polish policy. This national enmity, naturally, is not an immutable factor; but during a recent visit to Poland I had ample opportunity to observe that it still exists and is kept alive by the official policy of the Federal Government and by pronouncements such as the recent one on the refugee issue by Chancellor Erhard.

F. L. CARSTEN

University of London

MR. HELLMANN and I are in agreement concerning the motives of the Ulbricht régime. But the facts cannot be denied. Under Russian surveillance, the removal of prominent Nazi and Nazi accomplices from East German administrative cadres and public life has been drastic. The number of former sympathisers with Nazism safely ensconced in West German industry and commerce, in certain branches of education and, until very recently, in the judiciary is notorious. Many would still be in their places were it not for such outside proddings as the Eichmann trial.

As to dealing with the past: the teaching of recent history in West German schools and universities remains disturbingly patchy. Much of what East German school children are taught about the concentration camps and the record of public support for Hitler is passed under judicious silence in the West. What is, perhaps, even worse, as the present dispute over Professor Fischer's revaluation of Germany's responsibilities in 1914 shows, the best way for a young German academic *not* to get a job is to show interest in unpleasant truths.

GEORGE STEINER

Churchill College,
Cambridge

"The Struggle for Kafka & Joyce"

THE RECENT CONFERENCE of Rumanian writers in Bucharest revealed clearly that what was referred to in the May ENCOUNTER as "The Struggle for Kafka and Joyce" is becoming a general battleground throughout Eastern Europe. A young writer, S. Damian, actually praised Proust, Kafka, and Joyce, and considered them "explorers who contributed to a better understanding of man." He added, with a slight nod to the Party commissars, that "even if we do not integrate certain prose works within the framework of realism, we should not reject them as decadent literature."

It would seem that after the Russian translations of Kafka, and the Hungarian plea to the Czechs (in Professor Georg Lukács' interview with a Prague paper) to "discuss freely all literatures," the cultural "opening to the West" can now take place everywhere. During the March conference in Bucharest, the Rumanian academician, Tudor Vianu, cried out: "We are the local and devoted citizens of our country—but we are also the citizens of the world, we cannot help being the citizens of the whole wide world. . . ."

This is especially poignant in view of the fact that in Rumania no actual concessions have yet been made in the artistic field as a result of de-Stalinisation. Rumanian literature itself remains only a footnote to Zhdanovist æsthetics. Still, cultural contacts with the West have been growing, and a new magazine, *The 20th Century*, has devoted itself to foreign literature. Even Gheorghiu-Dej (in a speech on February 15th) approved the idea that "our reader may become better acquainted with the valuable works of other literatures."

The major ideological problem appears to be whether writers who read Western literature won't "go and do likewise." The President of the Rumanian Writers' Union, Mihail Beniuc, promised that the Rumanian public would be given an opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the latest literary works—but "without thereby making any concessions in our attitude towards the problems of artistic and literary creation" (*Gazeta Literara*, April 2nd).

Thus, the price of importing Kafka, Joyce, Proust, Beckett, et al., is a kind of neo-Lukács interpretation of their basic "anti-bourgeois" content. For Georgeta Horodinca, Beckett describes "the decay of capitalism" and Dürrenmatt's works are "a critique of bourgeois society"; as for "the fathers of modern Western literature, Proust, Kafka, and Joyce—all exponents of a very personal subjectivism—they have done no more than describe man's alienation in capitalist society. . . ." For some, Jean Genet or Robbe-Grillet are inadmissible: the one neglects to condemn the evil portrayed, the other is too defeatist. For others even "the theatre of the absurd" should be translated and performed, for what was being satirised but "the absurdities of capitalist society"?

It is, of course, hard to make out how much of this is seriously offered as literary criticism—and how much as tactics to liberalise the Leninist censorship list. A gifted and courageous Rumanian poet, A. E. Baconsky, argued that even these Western poets who have not actually "committed" themselves "should be studied attentively" and that writers should no longer resort to "primitive and cheap denunciations." Ion Ianosi also argued that "it would be unfair to confine the literature of a capitalist country to its left-wing writers."

Most touching of all was the confession by O. S. Crohmalniceanu: how indeed can one expect to understand St. John Perse, if we are not familiar with Mallarmé, Valéry, and Claudel? And if Western writers are "confused minds," then the problems have not yet been sufficiently clarified—"for otherwise how can it be explained that their false interpretation finds an echo in so many human consciences?"

It will also, I think, interest your readers to

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know that for the first time the Rumanian-born dramatist, Eugène Ionesco, was praised. True, his *Rhinoceros* was put forward as "a remarkable anti-Fascist play." But what is important and dramatic is that Ionesco, like Kafka, Joyce, Proust, and the others, are no longer Orwellian "un-persons."

MIHAIL VIANEC

Vienna

A Word Against Stereotypes

MRS. R. PRAWER JHABVALA is exceedingly clever and amusing on life in Delhi ["Open City," ENCOUNTER, May]. She has a keen eye for the minutiæ of Indian settings and ways. The obvious strikes her as meaningful. This is her great gift as a writer. But she builds only stereotypes from her observations. And she remains well outside it all, seeing it from her private Olympus in fixed, neat patterns far below.

There *is* a stream of foreign visitors to Delhi through the winter, and some of them *did* meet Mr. Nehru. That "more or less each one of them" obtains an interview with the Prime Minister and that "they tender advice to him" is, of course, untrue. Saying or writing that kind of thing is part of the business of being clever and amusing about India. It pays, and it demonstrates one's own superiority to all those foreigners who seek "a true insight into the lives of the people." Mrs. Jhabvala quotes the phrase as, in effect, what these pathetic foreigners "persuasively tell us." Their aspiration does not make me feel cynical or unsympathetic.

Mrs. Jhabvala has an interesting answer to the question why everyone seems to become so easily involved in Delhi's problems, and, by implication, in India's. It is because everything is so open and accessible. Three examples: Ministers are easily met, political gossip suggests freely circulating inside information; much of life, normally considered intimate and private, is effortlessly seen. The last-named is simply the direct result of extreme poverty and primitive conditions of existence. It has little to do with any specific Indian attitude. It is hardly fair to identify, even partially, the alleged openness and accessibility of Delhi society with its human dregs, however unfortunate. I dare say even a slight economic advance will reduce if not eliminate what is so distressingly witnessed to-day, without making any appreciable difference to the basic characteristics of Indian life. Indians, too, when provided with baths and toilets, shut the door before using them.

Our poor Ministers! Whatever they do is wrong. Had they refused to meet foreign visitors, they would undoubtedly be considered impolite. To-day they are accused of being "eager and waiting to give intimate interviews" to all foreigners who ask for them. *Waiting?* Never mind, it is only the stereotype at work again. Since there is a stream of visitors and our Ministers meet all who seek an interview, they must do no work at all. Or else, few of the foreigners actually seek an interview, while the Ministers are "waiting." About those political and other rumours, incidentally, the intelligent visitor soon learns to discount them.

Mrs. Jhabvala exaggerates, deliberately or inadvertently. Delhi bridegrooms may be seen riding on mares to the homes of their brides. The streets are not "crowded" with them. One might as well say that the streets of London are perpetually swarming with football fans or of Paris with Bohemian revellers. Similarly, we are told that the foreign visitor to India finds "it is not at all difficult to gather proofs and statistics and talk with as much expertise as any expert." Alas, statistics are still difficult to obtain in India, even for the expert, and "proofs" are rather more elusive in India than elsewhere.

Mrs. Jhabvala adopts altogether too supercilious a tone towards India's foreign visitors. I see nothing wrong with "hankering after invitations to private homes," except for the sneer implied in "hankering." Pity the foreigner anywhere who fails to enter a native home. Which one of us, travelling abroad, has not been delighted to receive such an invitation? I must confess that I was increasingly suspicious of Mrs. Jhabvala's credentials as I followed her escorting her hypothetical foreigner to the three types of Delhi host she tolerantly displays for his inspection. That Additional Secretary to the Government of India, for example, with pipe, baggy flannels, and Oxford background. Surely he is a caricature. A good one, perhaps, since the type is not unknown, but still a caricature. His wife actually does welfare work among destitute widows! And those "superbly trained" servants. There should have been dethroned Maharajahs too. And a Sadhu. And a snake charmer.

IT IS ALWAYS TEMPTING to make a neat contrast, but the picture loses its authenticity. "Most of the Indian guests make for the Western dishes, the Western guests . . . for the Indian dishes." No, Indians prefer Indian food, even when abroad. This is one of the facts of Indian life and cannot be denied even when one wants to laugh at some aspects of it. But worse is to come. At the fanciful Under-Secretary's party, which makes Mrs. Jhabvala smile so sweetly, there are two misfits. One an indigenous affluent businessman, the other a poor relative. Thus the finishing touches are put to the stereotype. And its creator becomes somewhat uneasy at this stage. "Actually we are taking quite a bit of dramatic license here," she says. Right-o.

These people are not individuals. They are

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"Indians," and the foreign readers of the "Letter From Delhi" want to know what Indians are like. It's easy to entertain them by drawing a portrait in bold, broad strokes. The infinite variety of Indian life is pressed into a formula, the shades and nuances are eliminated, the conventional plot becomes somewhat thinner; at one stage, in the colony where the poor relative lives, even the trees disappear and the grass refuses to grow. Then the poor relative recites *The Lady of Shalott*. We have had our little fun, with a believe-it-or-not story.

So, dear foreigner, I hope you are disillusioned. Give up that wild notion you have of ever achieving "a true insight into the lives of the people." Mrs. Jhabvala is right when she says that "there is no way of finding what it is all about except by living here for a long time and with patience." Mrs. Jhabvala has lived here for a long time, and with patience. She has found out that the Additional Secretary with his Oxford accent sometimes "consults his family astrologer," that the "repressed looking women" at parties, rule their households firmly and are full of a gay, bawdy wit, that an Indian musician really starts to play after he has been at it for an hour or two (provided it's a night-long concert, I should add).

Is that the sum of what one learns, by living here for a long time, and with patience? Is it particularly shrewd to realise about India, what is true of all countries, though not in the same ways, that there is always more than meets the eye on the surface?

This is rather the beginning than the end of the matter.

NISSIM EZEKIEL

Bombay

David Jones

AS AN ENGLISHMAN, I found Goronwy Rees' "Have the Welsh a Future?" [March] and Geraint Vaughan Jones' rejoinder [June] very interesting. And with regard to Welsh affairs I do not want to "come between the fell opposed points Of mighty opposites." I have, however, been waiting for someone to comment on Mr. Rees' highly unsatisfactory description of the work of David Jones: and, since no Welshman has done so, an outsider must.

In the course of chiding his fellow-countrymen for living in a dream-world of the past, Mr. Rees pauses long enough to pay a compliment to David Jones, but immediately goes on to say that he is infected with the same tendency to enervating dreams:

> ... in his two books, *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata*, [Jones] has tried to convince us that the real world we inhabit is in fact the ancient world of Welsh myth and legend, so that when, for instance, the Welch Fusiliers thought they were fighting the Germans on the Western Front in the First World War, they were really fighting the bloody battle described in the heroic poem *Y Gododdin*, which the Welsh poet Aneurin is supposed to have composed in the eighth century.

God help us all, what kind of blatant Philistinism is this? The essence of David Jones' work is that he continually employs a double focus, seeing the world realistically and at the same time in the perspective of myth and legend. To him, the two are one. It is not a question of either/or. No one is denying that the Welch Fusiliers were fighting the Germans—but in doing so they were living, and dying, in the world of *Y Gododdin*. As Jorge Luis Borges has said, "all literature begins in myth, and ends there." It is a strange world in which this truth is clear to an Argentinian and an Englishman and hidden from a Welshman. Perhaps Mr. Rees' admiration for the scientific spirit of Lord Raglan has blinded him to the far greater achievement of his country's poets.

JOHN WAIN

Rhosgadfan,
Caernarvon

Pravda, Time, Encounter

Moscow

ONE OF THE MOST *romantic figures of the Bolshevik revolutionary movement, Paris-born Inessa Armand, reputedly close to Lenin, has been commemorated in the Soviet press. Memorial articles published in* Pravda *and* Izvestia, *the principal Soviet newspapers, are believed intended in part to balance the emphasis that has been given abroad to the personal relationship between Inessa, as she was generally known, and the Bolshevik leader.*

Reminiscences printed in the Soviet press and related at a memorial meeting held Saturday [May 9] in the Museum of the Revolution describe Inessa, who died in 1920, as a "real friend" and "close friend" of both Lenin and his wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya.

A recent article by an American expert on Russian affairs [Bertram D. Wolfe, "Lenin and Inessa Armand," ENCOUNTER, February] suggested that Lenin had loved Inessa. The Kremlin accused Time *magazine of anti-Soviet slander for referring to the Lenin household as a "ménage à trois." Last week it ordered the magazine's Moscow bureau closed.*

Reporting the closing of the Time *bureau for the first time to-day,* Izvestia, *the Soviet Government newspaper, said the magazine had "smeared what was dear and sacred to every Soviet person" and had "touched with dirty fingers the memory of the founder of the Soviet State." The newspaper challenged* Time *to "name any Soviet press organ that has ever written disrespectfully about Lincoln or Washington."*

NEW YORK TIMES

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Life & Letters Today

London

"THE *question of creating a new Ministry of Justice has been much discussed. Do you think this would be a good thing?"*

Lord Gardiner: "We've got such a department in England, the Lord Chancellor's Office, and it doesn't matter what you call it. What matters is whether it is efficient or not. No advantage would be gained by calling it the Ministry of Justice, particularly as there are people in England who think that to call it a Ministry of Justice would be to move towards a police state. . . ." THE ECONOMIST

London

"ALL THE MEN *I know," says Perdita, the beatnik poet, "are slobs, drips, or creeps." No doubt she includes the two men who share her charms in this smart comedy (at the New Arts Theatre) about middle-class adultery by Frank Marcus. Gerald is the sort of literary critic who writes articles on bingo for* ENCOUNTER *and after a visit to Manchester is "overwhelmed at the sheer beauty of the industrial North."* DAILY WORKER

New York

THE U.S. COURT *of Appeals has held that "parody and satire are deserving of substantial freedom both as entertainment and as a form of social and literary criticism." The court upheld this week the right of Mad Magazine to satirise the lyrics of popular songs. The ruling was against a group of Tin Pan Alley song publishers and writers, including Irving Berlin, who charged copyright infringement.*

"Through depression and boom, war and peace," Judge Kaufman said, "Tin Pan Alley has light-heartedly insisted that 'the whole world laughs' with a laugher, and that 'the best things in life are free.'" Judge Kaufman said that "the fact that defendants' parodies were written in the same metre as plaintiff's compositions would seem inevitable if the original was to be recognised, but such a justification is not even necessary; we doubt that even so eminent a composer as Irving Berlin should be permitted to claim a property interest in iambic pentameter."

NEW YORK TIMES

London

THE PRIME MINISTER'S *speech to the Lagos Parliament on Friday, and indeed his whole visit to Lagos, is a melancholy example of British diplomacy at its worst. Almost everything about the speech was wrong. In the first place a new speech-writer seems to have arrived on the scene, who specialises in the kind of biblical baby-language thought suitable for Africans . . . "Stirring of the pot of trouble"; "democracy of the lips"; "our own island story"; "confidence is a tender plant"; "it was a wise man who said 'to govern is to choose'"; "remember that all life is change."*

Why must Africans be assumed to understand only nursery prose? THE OBSERVER

East Berlin

THE PROBLEM *of the disaffection of the students becomes more troublesome each day. The Party's cultural weekly, "Sonntag," has conducted an inquiry in the Academy of Art, and the students have replied with remarkable frankness, criticising the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion, hypocrisy, and lies. A young painter, who is a member of the SED party, defended his non-political colleagues by saying: "Are we formalists simply because we have prints by Henri Matisse hanging in our studio?"*

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG

Ankara

IN *1961 Aziz Nesin was in serious trouble for a series of articles in a daily newspaper which were at first regarded as "Communist." He was forced to stop writing, and was disowned by the newspaper. A panel of university professors then sat in judgment on his case, arriving at the conclusion that the articles expressed socialist, but not Communist, ideas. This was important, as it was the first distinction ever publicly made in Turkey between socialism and communism. The distinction was, however, lost on the great majority of Turks.*

That Nesin was accused of being a Communist is typical of the muddled thinking which exists in Turkey about Leftism in general. Leftism of any kind has been taboo in this country since 1925, when Kemal Ataturk suppressed the Turkish Communist Party. No Communist or socialist literature is openly obtainable in Turkey. Not only is the Communist Party illegal, but no party has even dared to call itself socialist. Repression of the Left, until quite recently, amounted almost to farce. A university professor was suspected of being a Communist because his book-self contained a Larousse dictionary; Larousse, it was felt, had obvious connections with Russia! Two years ago, when an over-enthusiastic American trade unionist working in Turkey was arrested by the Turkish police, he protested: "But I'm an anti-Communist!"

"We don't care what kind of Communist you are, they're all the same to us," replied the police as they marched him away.

THE TIMES

Paris

CONVINCED *that Paris has too many statues, M. André Malraux, Minister of Culture, drew up a list of 200 for offer to other French cities. The Mayor of Evian, the spa on the Lake of Geneva, gladly accepted one of Molière, and arranged for it to occupy a choice site outside the thermal clinic. When the statue arrived, however, it was found to portray the dramatist-actor in the title part of "Le Malade Imaginaire" while playing which he died in 1673.*

Evian has now declined the gift.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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POSTSCRIPT

THE BRITISH PRESS, as well as many newspapers in Europe and in the United States, has published the recent news of an announcement by the Editors of ENCOUNTER and Mr. Cecil King, Chairman of the International Publishing Corporation. For the record, and for the benefit of those readers who may have missed it, we print it here, below. On this occasion, too, we should like to restate our heartfelt gratitude to the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris. Its grants over the years made it possible to establish and sustain this journal. No committee of sponsors[1] was ever at once so generous and so enlightened, for it understood that magazines aren't produced by committees (only camels are) and that editors could only go their own way, beholden to nobody but themselves (and their passions, prejudices, and philosophy). In that spirit of personal and political independence we intend to go on.

"ARRANGEMENTS have been completed, according to a statement by Mr. Cecil King, Chairman of the International Publishing Corporation, and Messrs. Stephen Spender and Melvin J. Lasky, co-Editors of ENCOUNTER Magazine, whereby the well-known London monthly review will be supported by the *Daily Mirror* group. A long-term contract has been negotiated which will give ENCOUNTER the financial and managerial assistance it requires for additional expansion. ENCOUNTER Magazine, which was established in 1953 as an Anglo-American review, has grown from a "little magazine" to an international journal with forty thousand circulation. It has been supported up till now by the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris, whose grants have come from private foundations, mostly American. The concluded new "Management Agreement" will not involve ownership of ENCOUNTER nor editorial control; but all the business affairs of the magazine, including finances, advertising and distribution, are being delegated to the International Publishing Corporation.

Mr. Cecil King said: "I think ENCOUNTER is the best magazine of its kind in the English language, and we are delighted to be able to help. An intellectual review always has difficulties in keeping going, and nowadays a world-wide readership can only be reached by a professional organisation. I am sure we can be of assistance there. It goes without saying that the present Editors will maintain their complete editorial freedom to write and publish as they please."

Messrs. Spender and Lasky said: "We are deeply grateful to Mr. King for the generous terms of support he has offered us in response to our request for publishing assistance. The prospects are now good that with more effective distribution and management ENCOUNTER may well become the first 'high-brow review' to be self-sustaining. No editorial changes are involved and we will continue to produce as independent and controversial a review of literature and politics as we know how." "

* The present International Council includes: Raymond Aron (France), C.A.R. Crosland (Britain), Pierre Emmanuel (France), Sidney Hook (U.S.), W. Arthur Lewis (West Indies), Minoo Masani (India), Asoka Menta (India), Ayo Ogunsheye (Nigeria), J. Robert Oppenheimer (U.S.), Denis de Rougemont (Switzerland), Luis Alberto Sanchez (Peru), Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (U.S.), Carlo Schmid (Germany), Hugh Seton-Watson (Britain), Edward Shils (U.S.), Ignazio Silone (Italy), Manès Sperber (France), and Michael Josselson (Executive Secretary).

AUTHORS

Luigi Barzini (whose father was editor-in-chief of the *Corriere della Sera*) is one of Italy's leading journalists. He has contributed regularly to ENCOUNTER: "Life on Formosa To-day" (September, 1955), "On the Isle of Capri" (October, 1959), "Curzio Malaparte" (August, 1960), "The Difference in the South" (June, 1962). He published a book called *Americans Are Alone in the World* in 1954, and this portrait of Mussolini forms a chapter in his forthcoming study of *The Italians* (Hamish Hamilton, London, and Atheneum, New York). . . .

George A. Miller is Professor of Psychology in Harvard University. This year he is visiting Oxford as a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar and is participating in the creation there of a Psycholinguistic Research Unit sponsored by the Medical Research Council. His first book on psycholinguistics, *Language and Communication*, was published in 1951. A more recent and more general book, *Psychology: The Science of Mental Life*, will soon be published in England by Hutchinson. . . .

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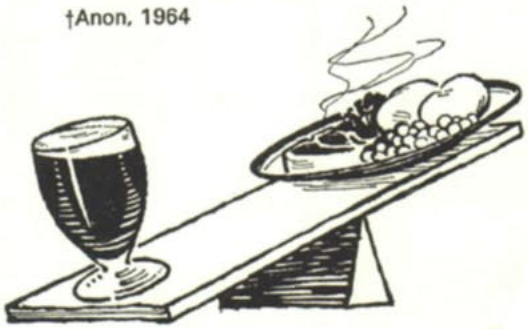
DO YOU SEE SAWS?

We've seen an old saw
Which is well worth repeating—
It says, Good Eatynge
Deserveth Good Drynkynge.*

And that old saw
Has set us thinkynge
How Guinness with meals
Takes a good deal of beatynge.†

*Barham, Ingoldsby Legends, 1840
†Anon, 1964



GUINNESS

IS FINE WITH FOOD

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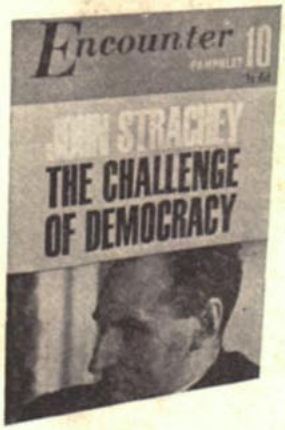

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